University of Alberta

Noisy Expectations: Sound of Modernity in Sigmund Freud's and Arnold Schoenberg's fin de siècle

by

Dariusz Gafijczuk ©

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To Lucie, who makes all these pages dance and all the books insignificant. You make it all worthwhile.

Abstract

My dissertation analyzes the cultural identity of modernity, attempting to find its definition in Vienna at the turn of the 20th century. The study presents a narrative which (following in the footsteps of Foucault's historical archaeology) identifies a range of cultural artefacts that serve as documents which give us access to a nascent and more visible state of a cultural lexicon that is still active today. In this sense, the thesis addresses three key questions: (1) what is the character-type or grammar of 'our' modernity, how does it operate and according to which definitions? (2) what type of social/cultural individuality does it create/enable? And (3) what kind of functionality does it proclaim as its operative logic?

Investigating these issues, the study arrives at focal point which juxtaposes two exemplary personalities of the time, Sigmund Freud and Arnold Schoenberg. The cultural/historical data thus gathered, paints a picture of a modernity which experiences a type of physical de-materialization, evident in the musical 12-tone system of Arnold Schoenberg. The subject and his ego are enclosed in the field of *aesthetics of disappearance*, thus bringing the social self and its psychology (especially in the psycho-analytic guise of Freud's theory) much closer to the structure of sound and its naturally-occurring plasticity. Such framing of the argument exposes a unique psychology of distances at work in the operative logic of modernity in practice. I try to understand this practical logic through Georg Simmel's concept of the ruin, which constitutes a structure of mediation between far and near, *par excellence*. All this leads to a paradigm of culture and psyche which works on the basis of aesthetic expectations and subjective plasticity,

respectively – a cultural psychology which liberates forms, as it also fragments and throws into decay.

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Musical pictography ... as if the different senses had mistaken their outlets...

Heine –

Preface: The Scene and its Setting

Modernity, due in part to the always hesitant moment of its first appearance and the profusion of analytical discourse these uncertain origins generate, has become a discipline of discursive interfaces. In this, the incessant talk about its shape and configuration, not only instigates and further extends the technical prowess that condenses and distributes information, under whose 'blessing' modernity proclaims to be a historical event first of all, but also turns modernity against itself, making it consume its own sign, if you will.[1] In this sense, we may say that the notion of being modern is engaged from the start in the analytical exercise comparable to the 'talking cure' in psychoanalysis, where one purges memory in order to remember anything at all.

Whether taken on the level of broad historical periods (in art, politics, economics, technology or culture) or approached on the more abstract, philosophical ground of its ontological meaning that investigates the seemingly innocent necessity to define ourselves through, not simply contemporaneous time (duration that is always parallel to the immediate reality), but most of all through *contemporary or modern* temporality, modernity always returns to the (by now) strained comfort of its name. This proper name, which hesitates whenever it is faced with the question of propriety, appropriation and property, has nonetheless become a reflex of sorts, co-opted into and mixed-up in the definition of our current position, or at least its very recent past.[2] Being such a 'colloquial' linguistic mannerism, as something that simply rolls off the tongue when one is asked to provide a summation of our immediate presence, modernity fits the parameters of common sense, its evenly distributed perception. But this same reflexive position brings with it a complication, given that we are usually suspicious of simplicity and its almost servile act of 'making available'.

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[1] "The spontaneity of being modern conflicts with the claim to think and write about modernity…." (Paul de Man, *Literary History and Literary Modernity*, p. 142).

The linguistic intensification of descriptions and definitions reaches a limit when in order to gain an insight, we need the help of distance, when there is no other choice but to step out of the subject matter, and in a sense dispose of the reality one is attempting to investigate (or at least find an indirect route to it). If, as has been observed many times, there is no value without limits,[3] we can also say, that the ability to make a pronouncement about something like modernity, rests on the possibility of placing our common experience outside its confines (at the apex of another limit), so as not to fall victim to the comfort and the debilitating effect of the pre-given values that direct and 'administer' the concept – modern. In other words, if we do not want to dispense with the standardization of language which describes a reality that is often capricious (and beyond a certain point, we cannot escape such acculturation into a standard), we have to look for this part of ourselves that is generally acknowledged and made legitimate in its normalcy, elsewhere. Such 'elsewhere' presents us with a system of 'mistaken outlets' not because we are now looking in the right place, or a new, previously undiscovered place, but on the contrary, because we are able to bridge, juxtapose and connect the familiar, into deviating trajectories from the centre as the well-established oeuvre of significations.

---

[2] For a comprehensive study of the linguistic and cultural genealogy of the concept (starting with the Middle Ages notion of *modernus*) see Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism*.

[3] Paul Virilio, for instance, makes this plain: "Without limits, there is no value; without value, there is no esteem, no respect and especially no pity…" (*Art and Fear*, p. 63). Virilio's project in the aforementioned book means to explore the mechanics of the artistic mode of production and perception, so crucial and intimately connected to modernity. His judgment condemns both, in the strongest sense of the word, for it accuses art and modernity, or the modern art (the art of the modern, to be slightly more specific) of the total loss of value, given that now, it is excess and especially its banalization, that becomes the new limit. That Virilio's damning pronouncement might indeed be too harsh, or slightly misplaced, will emerge from our discussion, as will some of the themes Virilio identifies above. For now, let us simply keep the issue of excess, especially the way it is given the freedom to be *exercised*, in mind.

It is in this manner, that the present narrative is trying to think in loosened and disturbed associations, which speak not so much *about* history (especially history as historiography) as *to* the past in a specific configuration; not *about* modernity but *to* something that is merely contemporaneous with the time line of the last hundred years or so; a duration whose sequencing (the way I am attempting to walk the line) does not necessarily fall into its well established academic/intellectual purview. If this be a shortcoming, it is one, which is the result of my attempt to think not simply, or only *about* the subject matter at hand, but, in some measure, to find a way of thinking *with* it, that is, in concert with the type of logic that is hidden within its confines. This logic, in many ways, presents us with the same operational manifesto that is used today to discuss the principal historical manifestations of modernity: *the logic of expectation* that admittedly attempts to wring something out of the past and make it informative for the present. It is this type of an image that I will continually attempt to sketch, by indicating the positioning of the many possible points of attachment, that pierce through the historical cloud of the turn of the twentieth century and one of its most vibrant settings – the Viennese fin de siècle.

But it must also be said straightaway, that this setting, will not be accorded the privileged status; the type of elevated position that it has acquired through the booming 'intellectual industry' of historical discourse about Vienna, initiated (at least on this continent) by Carl E. Schorsky.[4] It will rather serve us as a backdrop, a stenography which frames the simultaneous occurrence of certain cultural/artistic events. In this, it is somewhat akin to Schoenberg's attitude towards the city, expressed in a letter to Mahler's wife (Alma), at the time when the composer was on his deathbed: "I don't even feel that there is a Vienna anymore. For me it was always only a city in which this or that personality lived"[5].

Given this opening description, in the following pages, I have attempted to speak in the voice of an *echo*. It is a sonar-like effect. It tries to gage the existence of a thing, by sending out its own voice into the blind space of the past and describe its dimensions, its existence and trajectory by interpreting the sound of the deflected wave. And it is not only because along the way much will be said about music and psychoanalysis in both of which the voice plays a major part, or maybe simply plays. The deployed *echo-effect* is at once the applied methodology, the object of study and the personal research ego that tries to listen and interpret. In this manner I speak out of myself, through Freud, through Schoenberg, and hopefully through the time whose outline sketches a silhouette of its own production, its identity.

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[4] Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna, Politics and Culture*. In the opening pages of this, now, classic work on the topic, Schorske says: "Vienna in the *fin de siècle*, with its acutely felt tremors of social and political disintegration, proved one of the most fertile breeding grounds of our century's a-historical culture" (p. XVIII). That the rumors of modernity's a-historicism have been vastly exaggerated, is proven not only by the context of the fin de siècle, which works with the past and not in independence of it, but also by Schorske himself, and other historians, who look precisely to the past, through the spectacles of historicism, in search for a defining element of what is modern. Needless to say, then, I do not agree with Schorske's blanket statement, which is, no doubt, motivated by a specific view of history, that always represses the past. In that, it finds itself on parallel tracks to the general momentum of modernity. But a repression of the past does not equal its total elimination.

[5] Arnold Schoenberg to Alma Mahler, March 27, 1911, in *A Schoenberg Reader – Documents of a Life*, ed. Joseph Auner, p. 96. Freud, not unlike Schoenberg, was also very disparaging in his comments about the city, throughout his life. See, Peter Gay *Freud: A Life for Our Time*, 9-10; and Ernest Jones *Sigmund Freud: Life and Work*, vol. 1, p. 322.

By speaking thus, out of intent, out of desire, out of curiosity and drive towards an understanding, I had no choice but to speak from the space of remoteness. This is why I do not speak *from* a point of view, but deliberately out of things, experiences, problems and puzzles encountered along the way. The 'from' in its form of a departure point was only the beginning, which had to be left behind as quickly as it gave itself to formulation, because this is the only way to get anywhere. That 'from' presented itself not in the shape of a specific place and its identification as something already and extensively spoken about via academic literature, but in the form of a somewhat nebulous setting and its hidden potential – a potential that is itself constructed from a series of departures:

> In short, by the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, the world was no longer constructed in quite the same way as it had been and its elements would no longer combine as they once did. Thought was now forced to move beyond its abode in the philosophy of transcendence – for too many of the sacred emblems of this hidden tradition such as God, Nature, and Truth had by now been sacrificed to the "modernizing" processes … and there arose, amid the vertigo and malaise, a fundamental ontological change that would have important effects on the nature of knowledge, perception, and representation.[6]

The mark of this uncertain potential is found in the 'beyond' not of deliverance (the generic utility of all religions) but a *delivery* as a mode of communication and perception, which ultimately, in its entire breadth, runs along the fault-line of the following question: *What is that 'thing' we can claim (or make a claim against), in this age which seemingly* ***belongs*** *to us, the age of modernity?*

The thesis which will be employed in its strictest definition of a supporting function, a sort of 'prosthesis' to the impending narrative is: *any functional performance, almost as soon as it is accomplished promulgates the condition of disability* which gives the merely instrumental presence its voice, perhaps even allowing it to cry out in disapproval of the restricted environment that functionality necessarily engenders. This thesis emerged from the way I have navigated and moved through events, biographies, concepts.

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[6] Sanford Kwinter, *Architectures of Time: Toward a Theory of the Event in Modernist Culture*, p. 36.

Hence, what will come under review throughout is the question of art, especially music, as one of the most prominent ceremonials in the performance of modernity. In this case, art is not simply equivalent to the generic category of something wistfully creative or most recent as the phrase 'modern art' purports to present the matter. Rather, art will be allowed to take on the meaning of and the responsibility for an engagement which configures reality, first and foremost. This is not an imposed intellectual distinction, a synthetic reinterpretation of the past, but a definition already provided, more or less in its ready-made form, given that it is one of the preferred dialects of modernity's language, especially in its fin de siècle phase.

Music, Schoenberg's music and its connection to one of the most famous events at the turn of the twentieth century, psychoanalysis, is the skeleton of our exploration. This somewhat overlooked intersection, which our narrative is setting adrift, concentrates on the notion of analysis. By using the weapon of its own design, interpretation of depth and its dynamics against psychoanalysis' and music's own body of 'knowledge', I will expose them as a product of reluctantly disclosed cultural forces that like to remain incognito, historically speaking.

Matters are further obfuscated when Freud individualizes his method, attempting to take full possession of its principles, thus undermining its generality as a 'science':

> I must however make it clear that what I am asserting is that this technique is the only one suited to my individuality; I do not venture to deny that a physician quite differently

> constituted might find himself driven to adopt a different attitude to his patients and to the task before him.[7]

In the case of Schoenberg, the fight for ownership of the 12-tone technique, takes on the shape of a polemical engagement with Josef Hauer whom, in his 'Notes for an Autobiography', Schoenberg mentions under the heading of 'Thiefs'.[8]

Individualities, both as specific historical persona and subjective categories, nonetheless speak of more than simply themselves. The question of the individual versus the multiplicity of the social (as another one of the complexes that is so particular to being modern) will arise in the course of our discussion. But throughout, it is in a more generic sense that individuality will hold fort in our narrative; through Freud and Schoenberg as two personalities who, by no design of their own, have acquired a somewhat emblematic and monumental stature, as the sign-posts that indicate and negotiate the direction our most recent past had taken.

In an ad hoc way, the investigative effort here exercised, speaks in a voice of empathy with Foucault's method of archaeology, "[t]his other history, which runs beneath history, constantly anticipating it and endlessly recollecting the past [which] can be described – in a sociological or psychological way – as the evolution of mentalities…".[9] It is a method that tries to look for signs of the factually accepted reality in places that are apparently indifferent to it, which seem to be in some measure independent of it and organized by a different set of rules, all along using the mechanics of distance, to release:

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[7] Sigmund Freud, "Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psycho-Analysis", in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, SE 12:111, hereafter cited in text as *Standard Edition*.

[8] Joseph Auner, *A Schonberg Reader*, p. 9.

[9] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 136, hereafter cited in text.

> A theme whose enunciative analysis tries to free itself. In order to restore statements to their pure dispersion. In order to analyse them in an exteriority that may be paradoxical since it refers to no adverse form of interiority. In order to consider them in their discontinuity, without having to relate them, by one of those shifts that disconnect them and render them inessential, to a more fundamental opening or difference. In order to seize their very irruption, at the place and at the moment at which it occurred. In order to rediscover their occurrence as an event … it is a question of rediscovering that outside in which, in their relative rarity, in their incomplete proximity, in the deployed space, enunciative events are distributed (*The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 137).

Such treatment of phenomena and events in complexes which elevate the monumental over the interpretive,[10] will only serve us as a 'rule of thumb', which cannot and does not aspire to Foucault's ultimate standard of an archaeology which is "…not an interpretive discipline [because] it does not seek another, better-hidden discourse (ibid., p. 155); a standard whose lofty proscriptions Foucault himself inadvertently violates. For in that case where something at long last must be said, the discourse that nonetheless crystallizes, stretching its semiotic membrane like a cat does its spine, in the seeming simplicity of its movement, must also become communicative for us, i.e., interpretative. In Foucault's methodological ingenuity and sophistication, I only seek a way of being inspired, thus spawning a didactic thought experiment of imaginatively entering Freud's study at Berggasse 19, laden with antiques, expression of Freud's own sort of archaeology. This is also how I will attempt to figuratively immerse myself in the prong of fin de siècle's own momentum.

It could be said that most of Freud's theoretical efforts concentrate on combating the primary uncertainty about the world that was facing him, which he proposed to redistribute through the mitigating circumstances of an entirely new discourse. These efforts have been bequeathed to us, as the well-known activities of archiving the archaeological/psychic data gathered in the course of Freud's own uniquely calibrated exploration. This process hangs in the balance of power, always suspended between the notion of causality and the much lower yield of descriptive representations. This is, for instance, Wittgenstein's judgment about psychoanalysis:[11]

---

[10] "Archaeology tries to define not the thoughts, representations, images, preoccupations that are concealed or revealed in discourses; but those discourses themselves, those discourses as practices obeying certain rules. It does not treat discourse as *document*, as a sign of something else, as an element that ought to be transparent, but whose unfortunate opacity must often be pierced if one is to reach at last the depth of the essential in the place in which it is held in reserve; it is concerned with discourse in its own volume, as a *monument*" (ibid., p. 155).

> The difference between a reason and a cause is brought out as follows: the investigation of a reason entails as an essential part one's agreement with it, whereas the investigation of a cause is carried out experimentally… [I]t is a way of speaking to say the reason was subconscious. It may be expedient to speak in this way, but the subconscious is a hypothetical entity which gets its meaning from the verifications these propositions have. What Freud says about the subconscious sounds like science, but in fact, it is just a *means of representation*… [where] as in aesthetics, things are placed side by side so as to exhibit certain features.[12]

This is why psychoanalysis itself occupies a space somewhere in-between art and science. The art in psychoanalytic theory (any theory) is the decision where to begin, or even to begin at all, what questions to postulate and then, how to juxtapose all these beginnings into a representational complex. The science is the ability to end, to close and bring together, to make an affirmative statement by experimentally designing an end, from the beginning. Whereas art is full of potential but also strained under the weight of its impinging uncertainty, science is surrounded by the danger of truth which nonetheless inspires comfort through the always settled possibility of an impending answer. In the end it is art that through the boldness of its imaginative world building forces a decision out of science about us.

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[11] The very interesting issue of Wittgenstein's reaction to Freud and psychoanalysis is treated comprehensively by Jacques Bouveresse, *Wittgenstein Reads Freud: The Myth of the Unconscious.*

[12] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures: Cambridge 1932–1935*, pp. 39–40.

Freud sees this quite clearly. The artist mediates a resolution between the pleasure principle and the reality principle[13] as someone who at first separates himself from the reality of the world but eventually finds a way back from fantasy through the act of turning his imaginings into a new type of the real, which serves as a fruitful image of the world, even if nothing changes materially. Art, then, seems to engage in the collective act of compensation by representation, producing a type of replacement value, which approximates the never fully accessible truth of existence.[14] This is why, the attempt to approach psychoanalysis through art, is to 'put the cat amongst the pigeons', so to speak.

If art presents a resolution of the distance between the primeval and the civilizing forces (in Freud's language), then its product, a certain identity of psychic phenomena, amounts to an aesthetic effect, as Wittgenstein rightly points out in his summary evaluation. But we must also make this caveat: what may appear as an irrational inconsistency, or even a weakness from the perspective of Wittgenstein's specific philosophical project of logical positivism, acquires the advantage of prosaic humanism – a widely-disseminated texture of perception, which might not get at causes, but provides a plethora of reasons, which open up structures to resonant encounters with spaces where causes might ultimately be found. This is the justification for the use of music, or more accurately sound and its acoustics in a sort of mirror effect, trying to expose the psychoanalytic reality, by identifying its own secretly operating artistic drive. This mode of exposition, will continually and gradually, be extended to the general context of the fin de siècle, which, as we will see, operates under a type of aesthetics, that proposes to establish itself as a sort of technique of communication with reality in general.

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[13] This discussion, which will be reproduced in more detail at a later point in our narrative, is found in Freud's *Two Principles of Mental Functioning* (SE 12: 218–226).

[14] "For Freud, art is the nonobsessional, non-neurotic form of substitute satisfaction…" (Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, p. 163).

Whereas the corpus of Freud's work teeters on the line of indecision as to its artistic or scientific identity, Schoenberg's output is seemingly lodged in the realm of the former. Only seemingly, because as we will learn, Schoenberg practices a very strange sort of art, whose basis is a certain interpretive formula of relations between tones which repeat themselves in a pre-determined sequence. If Freud is an archaeologist, then Schoenberg could be described as an artisan. This is evident not only in the technical aspects of Schoenberg's music but his other, strictly speaking engineering activities, expressed in the form of his many designs (the musical typewriter, chess, furniture, various objects of everyday use) to which he devotes surprisingly a lot of time and effort. What we are confronting here are two currents moving in mutually enhancing, even though reverse directions: of self-promoted 'science' (psychoanalysis) which desires to be art, and falls into its pull because it has no other choice if it wants to move beyond its own limitations, and 'art' (music) threatened by its own hand which needs to be scientific to escape its own death impulse, the non-identity of its own construction and its descriptive ideology. It is at the intersection of these two currents, by building a bridge between them, that we will look for a connection, a crossing point, which this narrative is trying to span.

1. *The Question of Performance*

Symptoms and performances are practically indistinguishable from each other. The symptomatic discharge and its very real physical, plastic and usually vociferous showing, is a sort of *abstract* of the entire aetiology of a disorder – a piece of the whole, whose identity is precisely performative because constructed through a series of *events* of higher or lower intensity. At closer inspection, we observe that performance contains *form* and *formula* within the field of its activity. Form is always an aesthetic manifestation; it is also an impoverishment, an effect of a recipe for condensation, concentration, hence also reduction. This is why we are able to conclude relatively confidently, that form in the practice of its institution, is always symptomatic.

Dealing with a range of performances, then, at the level of the symptomatic, affords us a window of opportunity to see into the sheltered and murky enclosures. Performance via its variegated eventfulness will play a major part in both Schoenberg and Freud, from its more official and public instances of theoretical/practical elaborations (Freud's writings, Schoenberg's concerts), its semi-private occurrences (dealing with students, patients, followers), to finally the very private and biographical. One such symptom, which will repeat itself incessantly throughout Freud's life, is the apparently strained relationship with music; its mistreatment and misrecognition, at least on the surface, as the lining of sound will ultimately envelope the psychoanalytical habitat in its entirety.

The acoustical censorship begins early, when Freud is a university student and the family lives in the cramped quarters of the traditionally Jewish section of Vienna (Leopoldstadt). This is how Peter Gay recounts the incident:

> This apartment, to which they [the Freuds] moved in 1875 … was scarcely lavish for the sizable family. Alexander, the youngest, Freud's five sisters, and their parents crowded into three bedrooms. Freud alone had his "cabinet" for his private domain, a room "long and narrow, with a window looking on the street," more and more crammed with books… If Freud's needs clashed with those of Anna or the others, his prevailed without question. When, intent on his school books, he complained about the noise that Anna's piano lessons were making, the piano vanished never to return. The Freuds must have been among the very few middle-class Central European families without a piano…[15]

But there was another family who lived in the second district of Vienna at that time, which shared a similar experience of absence: "It seems that there was no music-making in Schoenberg's parents' house. Even after the father had opened a collection agency the family remained in modest conditions and did not own a piano".[16] Of course, we should not overestimate such anecdotal evidence. Yet, taken at the level of the symptomatic, these circumstances speak to a certain logic, which, as will be seen, informs the auditory phenomenon in both, Freud's and Schoenberg's mature creativity.

They start from two opposite ends. Freud progressively fills the silence, which was so precious to him during his study years, with his own instrument for sound-making, a process which begins in 1886 with the publication of a medical paper on the development of the acoustic nerve.[17] Schoenberg, who thanks to his early childhood experience, was never fully proficient at any musical instrument, progressively extends this disability, by dispensing with the instrumentality of sound and its musical functionality, silencing it, in a way. Both men will eventually meet in the middle, by constructing systems of thought and practice, which not only speak to each other, but mirror the overall sensuality of the fin de siècle.

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[15] Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time*, pp. 13–14.

[16] H. H. Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg, His Life, World and Work*, p. 20.

[17] In actual fact, between the years of 1885 and 1886, Freud published three neurological papers, whose central concern was the acoustic nerve. A good synopsis is found in Jones, *Sigmund Freud, Life and Work*, vol. 1, pp. 225–227.

Another interesting aspect of these two parallel episodes (from the vantage point of our argument) is the very visible, early establishment of *irregularity* in Freud's and Schoenberg's lives, through an entire range of symbols; an irregularity in relation not only to music and sound, their blockage, because they have been accused of interrupting or declined altogether, but also to the sense of fake performance of identities. For, through his objection, Freud not simply denies the pleasure of music to his sister (a pleasure which, as he will say some years later, he is unable to take part in)[18] but also inadvertently and partially blocks the consumption/expression of a pre-assigned bourgeois identity to Anna and the family. This is a pattern that will be repeated again and again by Freud himself, especially in his practice and the nexus of ties that bind the patient into a series of stammers and interruptions, returning him or her to a subjective morphology which diverges from the previously accepted norm of existence.

Freud's disavowal of sound acquires further symptomatic significance, which goes to the heart of the psychoanalytic technique itself. For psychoanalysis is the performance of complaint, voicing of grievances through the production of sound. In this, Freud is unable to escape the raucous sonority, which will leave him with no choice but to develop an entire philosophy of 'soundings' and the 'technology' for their recording, interpretation and projection. Psychoanalysis is indeed about the treatment with and through sound, and its productive output is central to the psychology that from the start becomes known as the 'talking cure', although at first sight, there seems to be a world of difference, a large gulf separating musical sound, and speech which is weighted down by the semiology of meaning. But this is the type of signification and meaning that music also carries through, in the form of tonality as the musical grammar, against which Schoenberg will stake a claim, through a compliant initially and then an accusation.

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[18] In an (originally) anonymous paper, published in 1914, *The Moses of Michelangelo*, Freud writes: "Whenever I cannot do this [contemplate a work of art], as for instance with music, I am incapable of obtaining any pleasure (SE 13: 211). I will discuss this paper, and the unusual circumstances surrounding it, at an appropriate time.

We are thus concerned about the *material-acoustic-phenomenon*:

> The material element, which in all aesthetic enjoyment is at the root of the intellectual one, is greater in music than in any other art. Music, through its immateriality the most ethereal art, and yet the most sensuous one through its play of forms without any extraneous subject, exhibits in this mysterious fusion of two antagonistic principles a strong affinity for the nerves, those equally mysterious links in the invisible telegraphic connection between mind and body.[19]

Freud becomes the champion of such a telegraphy, or material action at a distance, comparing the role of the analyst to that of a telephone receiver, thus initiating the process of circular interpretations, based on sequences of looping, interminable transmissions from the recesses of the psyche.

Even though we cannot experience the materiality of sound directly, as a visible body, we encounter its confines through the force of effects; through exposure and resistance to the 'mechanics' of the sound wave, by turning into its stream which can also be experienced through a blockage of reception – a position along the line of distinction Hanslick draws between pathological and musical hearing.

Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904), perhaps the best known music critic in Vienna from around the mid 19th century, up until his death, made a name for himself through his writings on the aesthetics of music as well as his persistent polemics against Richard Wagner. In his best known work, *The Beautiful in Music* (first published in 1854, and reprinted nine times in its German edition) Hanslick argues against the still prevalent appraisal of music as an art, whose most basic and valuable merit is found in the affective arousal: "…I firmly adhere to the conviction that all the customary appeals to our emotional faculty can never show the way to a single musical law" (*The Beautiful in Music*, p. 4). It follows then that the inquiry into musical aesthetics is "…mainly and primarily directed against the widely accepted doctrine that the office of music is to represent feelings" (ibid., p. 4). Feelings are extraneous notions that are motivated by the psychic/nervous state of the body, but not, strictly speaking, musical phenomena, which are enclosed in the purity of their own form as sound: "…the beauty of a composition is *specifically musical*, i.e., it inheres in the combinations of musical sounds and is independent of all alien, extramusical notions" (ibid., p. 5).

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[19] Eduard Hanslick, *The Beautiful in Music*, pp. 78–79, hereafter cited in text.

Affectivity, presenting us with a false assumption of what music is about, perpetuates the condition of *pathological hearing*, since it misidentifies sound in its most basic materiality, which is always equal to itself. True hearing, on the other hand, is an intellectual and contemplative activity, which listens attentively to the sequencing that the combination of tones provides. The consequence is that:

> The word *Anschauung* (viewing, contemplating) is no longer applied to the visual processes only but also to the functions of the other senses. It is, in fact, eminently suited to describe the act of attentive hearing, which is nothing but a mental inspection of a succession of musical images (ibid., p. 11).[20]

Even if the fact of feeling something while experiencing sound, cannot be denied, there is no direct connection between music and emotion, since the latter does not originate in the acoustic structures, but is imported into them, by misdirected perception:

> For, in reality, there is no causal nexus between a musical composition and the feelings it may excite, as the latter vary with our experience and impressibility [sic] (ibid., p. 14).

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[20] Conversely, the aural was applied to the descriptions of the new phenomenon of photography: "the Photographer needs in many cases no aid from any language of his own, but prefers rather to listen, with the picture before him, to the silent but telling language of Nature" (Talbot, 1833, cited by the first photographer of madness, H.W. Diamond, 1856). Quoted in Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière*, p. 32.

The interesting fact, is that Hanslick provides a blueprint of acoustics which, only a few years later, will work itself into Freud's modelling of the psyche, for, as we will see, the patient in psychoanalysis is a case who promotes distorted perception as a pathology of listening, which Freud attempts to corner in its own distortion, through attentive listening as the proper approach towards the subject. He does so under the technical name of 'evenly suspended attention' (*gleichschwebende Aufmerksamkeit*), which precisely, eliminates the emotive factor, by not elevating certain kinds of content over others. This is why, the acoustic-material phenomenon, which will replay itself and find shelter in Freud's psychological matrix, operates according to the free association of images, not meaning, as in language, and that is why, according to Hanslick, "the essence of music is sound in motion" (ibid., 48). Music thus acquires the status of elastic materiality which works by always recombining and renewing sequential collaborations of tones:

> The musical material in the hands of creative genius is as plastic and pliable as it is profuse… [T]he union of sounds (from the interdependence of which the beautiful in music flows) is not effected by mechanically stringing them together but by acts of a free imagination... (ibid., p. 52).

This is a pattern whose bravado will also be explored by Schoenberg to its limit.

Hanslick's model of musical aesthetics is a dynamic one. Sound, given that it is a phenomenon that moves and paces, reflects reality, and it may even suggest feelings, but it is not the source of these as such. It operates in a similar way to the Freudian psyche, which collects psychic impulses into aggregates via condensation, displacement and imaginary representation, which allow for a reproduction of the deeper lying, independent psychological causes (i.e., the unconscious), but never constitute their total, conscious replacement. Hence, Freud will never fully dispense with the dual model of the psyche (although he will come quite close to doing so) because the amplitude of psychical processes will continually be suspended between the moment of their deeper composition, and their reproduction, via a performance. Curiously enough, Hanslick anticipates the psychoanalytic session some fifty years prior, when he writes:

> A state of mind manifests itself most directly in music when *origination and execution coincide*. This occurs in the freest form of extempore playing, and if the player proceeds not so much according to the strict methods of art as with a predominantly subjective tendency (a pathological one, in a wider sense), the expression which he elicits form the keys may assume almost the vividness of speech (ibid., p. 76, my emphasis).

Performance then, is a functionality of direction – of being directed, and in turn choosing a direction, of being towards something (like the audience, or the patient, for instance). Freud will later refer to this type of directionality as *transference*.

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The question from the start is about invention, specifically about assignation of names, as a response to the fundamental *namelessness*. Being thus entangled, we are always (as it seems) in the throes of inventing a message (and then always passing ourselves along the path thus created), a motion which deflects reality into the orbit of hermeneutics. If music is this ineffable, non-discursive potency which pushes us along a trajectory of communicating with the element which "[d]irectly, in itself … signifies nothing"[21] as Vladimir Jankélévitch says, how can we still cling to the idea of communicating with anything at all, when that 'anything' is, by its own nature, non-discursive? This is indeed the core of the problem facing Freud. Jankélévitch, having the benefit of time as an ally, writing in the intellectual climate of the post-war France, which had already taken a couple of lessens from the nascent modernity of a few decades before, resolves this tension, much in the same way Freud is inadvertently forced to do; by distinguishing between discursive and immediate communication. The latter situates us in the "…penumbra of melancholia [which can only take place] unilaterally, [as if] from hypnotist to hypnotized" (*Music and the Ineffable*, p. 9). This is where the anxiety is created and resolved through the layer of imputed manifestations because music, like the psyche "…has broad shoulders. In the hermeneutics of music, everything is possible, the most fabulous ideologies and unfathomable imputed meanings" (ibid., p. 11).

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[21] Vladimir Jankélévitch, *Music and the Ineffable*, p. 11, hereafter cited in text.

Here, we are standing face to face with the polarity of a two-pronged realism – the thing that is being described, and that thing's own material reality, which always presents us with the deed of ownership for its own phenomenon. It is in the process of such meta-signification and over-identification, during which we inadvertently step into the pathology of meaning. Psychoanalysis rebuffs such pathological meaning, its found signification in the certainty of names, and replaces it with an entirely different circuitry of communication, which organizes events acoustically, through 'meaning' as familiarity with its potential, which not unlike music:

> …is familiar with the echo, which is the melody's mirror-reflection of itself, and with canonic imitation… In polyphony, the voices speak together, harmoniously, but they are not speaking among themselves, *to one another*, they are not addressing themselves *to one another*: they are signing in concert for an outsider… (ibid., p. 20).

And it is in such a manner, that they will sing to Freud.

All this leads us to conclude, that history is somehow much more 'musical' than linear. Unlike the line, which treats any point along its trajectory as equivalent to any other that had come before and will come after, acoustics repeats the same, clearly identified elements, sequentially, in varying proportions. Logos, its discursive, dialogical musculature does not like repetition, because when things are said, and said well, repetition is unnecessary, it is a waste of time and efficiency when they must be repeated – an indication that communication had not really taken place.

But what about this sort of communication that is organized, that addresses itself and its environment, precisely through the pattern of repetition, its ruse, meter and rhythm? What happens when entire structures are built on such a premise? We can obviously and right away think here about psychoanalysis as such repetitive structure, driven by what Freud refers to as *Wiederholungszwang* (compulsion to repeat), as well as about Schoenberg's 12-tone system of sound, in which the sequence of pitches is repeated continuously, in a pre-determined ordering. In any case, this seems to be the field of confinement that both Freud and Schoenberg operate in. And then there is music and its 'vernacular', or maybe even more radically 'vehicular' drive which thrives on forgetful repetitions as a certain sensibility where: "One doesn't think about 'music', but, on the other hand, one can think according to music, or in music, or musically, with 'music'" (ibid., p. 101).

Jankélévitch, who, as we now realize, says something quite similar to what Eduard Hanslick proposes, perpetuates a psychoanalytic understanding of sound – an image which lies very closely indeed to Freud's practice. Or maybe it is correct to say, that psychoanalysis is simply sound in another form, provoking a personality, which, just as the musician in Jankélévitch's scheme, nonetheless expresses "…himself in the very act of not wanting to do so" (ibid., 42). In this sort of perpetual contradiction that music sets up for itself, are buried the dynamic outlines of the analysand or the patient in psychoanalysis, who via transference and the general mass of sonority of the spoken word, in the end and inadvertently expresses what he or she did not even realize was there to be expressed in the first place.

The production of sound within the confines of the psychoanalytic session, presents us with a very interesting notion, a notion on which Freud himself relies inextricably: the externalization of the unconscious element and its amplification through a technique of sound extraction. And right away, what we encounter is resistance, where "wishing not to express oneself is the great coquetry of the twentieth century" (ibid., p. 42).

Interestingly then, Jankélévitch concludes that music even though it can not say anything apart from itself, does nonetheless possess the power to open up its own experience in such a way that we would be able to convert its latency into an estimation of a lived experience that had passed through it: "I have refused to grant music the power of discursive development, but not the power to trace experience of lived time" (ibid., p. 93). In this, music is very much ensnared in the throngs of latent, unacknowledged autobiography, not unlike the Freudian unconscious:

> This autobiography – if autobiography there is – is a bit dream-like: it conveys the "meaning of a meaning", that is, the meaning along with that which has revealed it, the secondary meaning, and it hides the primary meaning, the meaning that is in short absurd (because it is a mixture of sense and nonsense) – the very meaning of life cut off by death… (ibid., p. 57).

Autobiography as dream work, in other words, which, in its irrationality, also touches something essential, which otherwise is too hot to handle.[22]

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[22] On the theme of autobiography, auto-analysis, psychoanalysis and music, especially through the writings of Theodor Reik (a member of the Freud circle), see Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *The Echo of the Subject*.

2. Performance with no Applause – Anna O.'s Private Audience

Anna O.'s 'private theatre' (as she herself calls it), constitutes not only the beginning, the first presence of psychoanalysis before the formulation of its own concept, but also pre-stages everything that will eventually follow (in psychoanalysis as well as in our narrative). It is a preamble then in the fullness of its word, stretched across the two moments of psychoanalytic inauguration before the word itself, and the moment of my recuperation of it in this text.

Preambles stride before the actual walking (from Latin *preambulus* 'walking before' from *pre* – 'before' + *ambulare* 'to walk'). 'Before' in any case is more complicated than the simple preceding in time, because it can also be, and is 'in front of', in the presence of an observer, both in time and topographically, in the fact that a certain space is being actively shared. It is a 'private theatre', a performance which, because of its reliance on 'before' in both senses just elaborated upon, happens in *real* time – a temporality which fuses past and present together, into a duration of the lived moment. The interesting aspect of such 'before' is the question of ownership, which formulated directly asks: whom does the experience belong to? It is here that we enter a quagmire of monumental proportions: of trying to assign the responsibility for an identity, whether it is the identity of art or science, or more specifically of psychoanalysis and music, or the individual personalities that are somehow circulated through their systems and decanted, like wine. Because we will learn momentarily that the way of such belonging, through the 'talking cure', 'examination', 'chimney-sweeping', 'recognizing work' etc., is dubious at best. All these formulations which are later adopted by psychoanalysis more or less piece-meal, are actually introduced/invented, i.e., spoken, by Anna O., during the spectacle of her 'private theatre'. They are also already translated, at least for us, because they are spoken in English, a fact that is not only interesting, but symptomatic of something that will preoccupy us until the end. There is also a more fundamental identity-crisis in all of this, or at least (to be more accurate) a more visible one, and it concerns Anna O. herself – her figure, her person, and her disease.

Studien über Hysterie, written in 1895, five whole years before Freud's *Traumdeutung*, is a collaborative work with Josef Breuer, although by the time of the second edition of the book, Breuer distances himself from the general theoretical leanings of the work, which are imposed on it by Freud. So the question of 'belonging' is present even here, because it seems that even though the two authors share equally distributed weight and responsibility for the text (Breuer's name, following the semiotic convention that is to mark such equality, appears first on the cover), its message, in the end, belongs to Freud. This fact becomes even more intriguing, if we juxtapose it against the story line of how Anna O. was 'discovered'.

The first important aspect of her discovery seems to be that, from the start, she belongs to Breuer, since she is his patient – at least at the beginning. For, not being able to deal with her performances, with the creativity and inventiveness of her hysteria, Breuer not only at one point invites an observer into the setting, in hopes of gaining a second opinion but also, by delivering the results via a collaborative publication, inadvertently transfers the entire episode as much into Freud's archive, as it had ever belonged to his. At one point then, through her inscription in the general annals of psychoanalysis, Anna O.'s story changes the hands of 'ownership' and is (unofficially) attributed to Freud, signifying the formative encounter between the disease and its interpretation.[23]

It would seem that it is precisely here, where we can rest and stop delegating responsibilities, but we would again be disappointed. Because the technique which initially becomes known as the cathartic method, as Freud acknowledges from the start and repeats in the years to come in several places in his oeuvre (although with varying degree of emphasis) is actually Breuer's! Freud simply adopts it, at first entirely, together with the application of hypnosis as a way of facilitating the 'talking cure', only later to give up this aspect of engagement for a modification based on suggestion (through both verbal and physical clues, such a pressing on the patient's forehead), finally settling on the method of free association, which becomes the backbone of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) – Freud's emblematic work.

The extent of this resonance of 'belonging' is not exhausted in that 'puppet theatre' whose three marionettes are Freud, Breuer and Anna. Anna O.'s real name is Bertha Pappenheim, a relative of Marie Pappenheim, a medical doctor, a writer and a poet who composes the libretto to Schoenberg's first operatic monodrama for voice *Erwartung* (Expectation). And here, the entire drama will repeat itself, because the story-line in the form of a libretto will undergo a series of crisis, of which the final outcome will present itself in the question of responsibility for the text. Marie Pappenheim will maintain throughout that the story-line is hers, and that Schoenberg adopted it, practically the way it was written. He will say that Pappenheim's text gave him a general direction, which was later explored (re-written) by other means. And thus, we are caught in the general mechanics of 'he said, she said' variety – again, a symptom of the whole. Let us try then to unravel this tangle of intervening moments a little more diligently.

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[23] Anna O's story is missing from the first two, German editions of Freud's complete works! See 'Editor's Introduction' to *Studies on Hysteria* (SE 2: X).

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The case of Anna O. is already *musical*. It not only happens in real time, but its beginning, its span and its tension (*Spannung*) embedded in the sonorous texture of listening, talking and interpreting, are collected in a sort of phonographic repository, which not only depends on its recording, but especially and foremost on the impulse for spontaneous production of sound. And the most essential event in that entire network of 'belonging' discussed above is the idea of composition. For ultimately everything that happens in terms of event sequencing, its texture and meaning, is under Anna's direction. Breuer and later Freud have no choice but to re-play it after the fact. Such 'after-the-fact' interpretation is the only way anything theoretical can take place.

The question of utmost urgency occurs at the point of invention – the moment in which events transpire through the circumstances of their unintended occurrence. Here we might just as well use Freud's term for occupation *Besetzung*, whose full rendition gives us, what it already implies in English, when contextualized. To occupy is to possess a space, often illegitimately and violently – to be invasive and to feel under siege; or at least and in any case, to *inveigh* one's occurrence into and onto a presence. The richness of signification invested in this word (to carry/introduce; to bring in, to place; to influence/entice; to carry away; to speak vehemently and even to attack or assail with words) proposes a very fertile, accurate and efficient recuperation of the psychoanalytic space and its setting. Such linguistic image also mimics Anna O.'s 'private theatre', its inventive spirit, the importance of words in all of this and the directive interchange of their mutuality and reciprocity.

Once again, all this brings about the question of ownership and belonging, which operating under the adage of linguistic intensification, imposes on us the problem of sound and sonority. For this question of possession, and what in the end might possess us, is a question that pitches, not only because it strays and hesitates, but because it acquires the stature above and beyond what its own identity recognizes, or rather differently; it becomes more than simply a question. In the process of asking about the proper channels of communication, this question itself becomes a *condition*, which from the start informs psychoanalysis in its every moment and subsequent move. As such, it not only matches the circumstances of sound in the uncertainty of its location, but most importantly from our perspective, it emerges as the *pièce de résistance* of modernity which asks about what belongs to it, and about its own 'belonging'. All of this can already be surmised from the seemingly innocent, simply informative character profile of the first psychoanalytic patient revealed to us in the first few pages of Breuer's and Freud's study. Let us now turn directly to them.

Anna O. is described as remarkably intelligent, well educated, of sharp intuition and critical understanding, with rich poetic imagination. All this makes her not very receptive to suggestion – a remarkable fact which (for now) we should simply keep in mind. She is a vibrant, sensitive young woman, prone to day-dreaming, who displays an active imagination, toned down by quick and efficient reasoning. In Breuer's own words:

> She had great poetic and imaginative gifts, which were under the control of a sharp and critical common sense. Owing to this latter quality she was *completely unsuggestible*; she was only influenced by arguments, never by mere assertions (SE 2: 21).

Of course (in many ways) such assessment constructs a vivid contradiction in terms. It seems that Anna O. responds to the inherent impossibility of formulation into a name and an identity that would cover adequately the space of her unease (dis-ease). And hysteria, in its simplicity and all-encompassing reach, simply will not do here, even though, in the end Freud and Breuer will settle for the familiarity of its empty name, only now with newly re-drawn contents. As Freud is at pains to point out, hysteria itself subsumes a whole range of other disorders, which makes it into a much more complicated phenomenon than was actually believed at the time:

> I went on to consider the case of neurosis which are commonly included under the diagnosis of hysteria. I reflected that it was not right to stamp a neurosis as a whole as hysterical because a few hysterical signs were prominent in its complex of symptoms. I could well understand this practice, since after all hysteria is the oldest, best-known and most striking of the neuroses under consideration; but it was an abuse, for it put down to the account of hysteria so many traits of perversion and degeneracy… Breuer's patient, Anna O., seems to contradict my opinion and to be an example of a pure hysterical disorder. This case, however, which has been so fruitful for our knowledge of hysteria, was not considered at all by its observer from the point of view of a sexual neurosis, and is now quite useless for this purpose (SE 2: 258–59).

Whether or not Anna's disorder was hysterical, or should be subsumed under a different name, is a matter of mere nomenclature, from the perspective of our immediate focus.[24] On the other hand, there is no doubt that the 1895 manuscript, as well as later efforts on Freud's part, are an attempt to unmask the complicity of things and symptoms, re-defining the ubiquity of names as neutral signifiers (under whose confines almost anything in the world can find shelter) into conditions which respond and are defined by a very specific technique of *listening* to the 'true' nature of a disturbance. In a way then, Freud and Breuer, in their constant jousting for Anna's experience, attempt to 'solidify' what previously found its reprieve in the gesticulation of a mere suggestion. And the beginning of this theoretical jest lies in the total and unmitigated unsuggestability of the patient!

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[24] For a brilliant study of hysteria's genealogy, especially its 19th century reinvention in the Charcot clinic, see Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière*.

But what exactly does it mean to be unsuggestable? – a direct translation of the German *unsuggestibel*, which preserves much of its clumsiness in both languages. The correct way to read this would be something like obstinate, not easily swayed or convinced, not prone to follow advice, not flexible. A more sensitive reading could reveal a graver affliction: a diminished capacity to be suggested, of having very uncertain dimensions, of being caught in quick-sand whose constantly shifting shapes create the exuberance but at the same time impotence in one's ability to define and draw outlines. Anna O.'s unsuggestible characteristics decline any kind of medical or even theoretical intervention, thus revealing aspects, which eventually become central concepts of psychoanalytic theory: resistance (*Widerstand*) as well as transference (*Übertragung*).

Especially worthy of notice is the direction of such transference. Being faced with Anna, Breuer is already at the mercy of the performer/patient; he must accept what is given to him, what is presented as a mass of sounds, words and images, over whose sequence and content he has no control, even though at this early stage, both Breuer and Freud still cling to the illusion of command by hanging onto nothing less than suggestibility of the entire setting, especially through hypnosis. Realizing the futility of this procedure, Freud will ultimately regain total direction over the performance, by creating a stable slab of psychic history through the Oedipus concept, and the general notion of sexuality. It is only in this manner, that whatever escapes the patient can be handled by always binding it to this psychic drama – Freud's own 'private theatre'. This realization also sheds light on Freud's reluctance and eventually his total opposition towards any attempt at limiting or weakening the theory of sexuality at the base of his fully mature procedure. Because without this point of attachment, this tonic and the key that opens the space already pre-marked and pre-formulated, the entire psychoanalytic set-up would very quickly deteriorate into a cacophony of voices and their obdurate 'he said, she said' soliloquy. The Oedipus Complex creates a very specific and non-negotiable interval of distance. No matter what the patient says, he or she only expresses a further removed or closer situated relationship of agreement, with possibly, dissonant overtones, if the provided psychic material from the patient's past, is a bona fide outlier. This is a very similar solution Schoenberg will employ in reference to the basis on which the 12-tone procedure rests, which treats dissonances as a form of agreement, or a further removed consonance.

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Anna's hysteria is marked by the loss of centre, the loss of language, its idiom and tonality. At one point she conducts conversion only in English, speaks ungrammatical German, loses the power of understanding of her native tongue, reads only in French or Italian:

> ...there appeared a deep-going functional disorganization of her speech. It first became noticeable that she was at a loss to find words, and this difficulty gradually increased. Later she lost her command of grammar and syntax; she also no longer conjugated verbs, and eventually she used only infinitives, for the most part incorrectly from weak past participles; and she omitted both definite and indefinite article. In the process of time she became almost completely deprived of words. She put them together laboriously out of four or five languages and became almost unintelligible... For two weeks she became completely dumb and in spite of making great and continuous efforts to speak she was unable to say a syllable... Her paraphasia receded; but thenceforward she spoke only in English – apparently, however, without knowing that she was doing so... Nevertheless, she herself could still understand the people about her who talked German. Only in moments of extreme anxiety did her power of speech desert her entirely, or else she would use a mixture of all sorts of languages. At times when she was at her very best and most free, she talked French and Italian... She now spoke English and could not

> understand what was said to her in German. Those around her were obliged to talk to her in English… She was, however, able to read French and Italian. If she had to read one of these aloud, what she produced, with extraordinary fluency, was an admirable extempore English translation (SE 2: 25–26).

Would it be a forced attenuation of facts to say that Anna used language not semiologically, but rather musically? That she was not after meaning (a meaning that she resisted in any case, and which Breuer was forcing her to find) but form? That she combined various idioms, into a simultaneous presentation akin to the immediacy of sound – a performance along the lines of extempore playing, referred to by Hanslick,[25] where origination and execution coincide and free the acoustics of language, by making music more like speech and inversely, speech more like music? This would mean that the patient is speaking in a sort of speech-song, or *Sprechstimme*, Schoenberg's favourite technique of vocal performance.[26]

This presentation of form, and curiously enough Anna's form, will find later expression in a formula of psychoanalytic treatment, where the episodes of altering states of consciousness, loss of speech, translation, inexpressibility of meaning, absence of awareness, reconfiguration of reality through the performance of symptoms, catharsis etc., will become the basic components of psychoanalytic construction; singular elements which repeat themselves in various sequences and inversions (like Schoenberg's 12-tones) that lift the entire composition of a disorder off its moorings, thus revealing its hidden discourse. And the pulse of intrigue here, is the attempted twisting of the sign which can only express the general impotence, if not a total lack of signification, into a base for its reinvention, discovery and spectacular presentation.

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[25] Cf. page 21 above.

[26] The half-sung, half-spoken vocal technique of *Sprechstimme* originates at the end of the 19th century. It is practiced by, among others, Engelbert Humperdinck in his melodramas. Schoenberg, in the course of giving instructions to singers, emphasises that: "The melody in the *Sprechstimme* by means of notes is not, except for isolated exceptions that are specifically marked, intended for singing. The task of the performer is to transform it into a speech-melody, taking into account the given pitch… However, the performer has to be very careful not to adopt a *singsong* way of speaking. That is not intended at all. In no way should one strive for realistic, natural speech. Quite on the contrary, the difference between ordinary speaking and the kind of speaking involved in a musical form should become obvious. But at the same time it must never be reminiscent of singing" (in Joseph Auner, ed., *A Schoenberg Reader*, p. 118).

Breuer's encounter with Anna rests on the broad shoulders of *expectation*.[27] This is perhaps the signature of all treatment, all encounter with the 'face' of illness, but expectation seems to take on new and monumental proportions in psychoanalysis. It is an expectation of return, of being able to receive the history of a disease (its aetiology) as a pay-off for an investment into the *moment* of engagement. This moment, which is not only well picked and imbued with the potentiality of self-analysis, but also constructed, whose facilitation requires all the experience, intelligence and cunning of the analyst to be timely brought to bear onto the setting, forces the masquerade of disjointed impressions into the 'pointillism' of expression. In this sense, psychoanalysis is about nothing less than bringing the moment to its crisis, and then averting the impending catastrophe by mitigating the stress via the process of narration which desynchronizes the immediacy of expression from the emotion of the psychic event. Anna O.'s performance then, is more than simply her 'private theatre' – it is rather something akin to the genre of monodrama, where the act and its monistic, singular soliloquy, stands-in for the nexus of de-ranged and distraught complications and implications of psychic dramaturgy.

The general typology of Anna O.'s pathological biography, of her lapses and their momentary sequencing, would comprise, among others: absences (general dissociative states), various forms of limb and facial paralysis, deafness, loss of speech, loss of language, periods of utmost lucidity (normality), anorexia, bed confinement, misrecognition of the people around her, general unresponsiveness to the environment, recognition of and responsiveness only to her therapist (Breuer). As I tried to indicate earlier, all these events belong to her, including the moments of absence (as Breuer refers to them) or more plainly, the states of self-induced hypnosis. This base condition of absence is caused by the secondary, intervening consciousness (what will later become the psychoanalytic unconscious), which seeps into and eventually takes over Anna's waking reality. Given this, the analyst has to do no more, than to be present at the right time for the performance to happen, in order to tap into the ready-made store of psychic wealth. To facilitate such synchronization of events, of this convergence between the patient's and the analyst's 'visions', all that at one point becomes sufficient, is the mere mutuality of presence. Hence as Breuer points out: "I was the only person whom she always recognized when I came in; so long as I was talking to her she was always in contact with things and lively…" (SE 2: 26). This contact and affirmation of presence takes on an interesting tactile aspect: "…she would never begin to talk until she had satisfied herself of my identity by carefully feeling my hands" (SE 2: 30). In such context of verification and validity, where he becomes merely an instrument in Anna's hands, any control that Breuer might seem or want to exercise, becomes not simply dubious, but outright impossible; for it is not he who sets the rules of the game, but Anna, by integrating him into the scene of her 'obscenity'. Again, we can see here the first, basic glimpses of what transference will mean to psychoanalysis, for as Freud says in his writings on the psychoanalytic technique, the technology of its information gathering, can essentially be reduced to transference, where the analyst becomes simply the catalyst, the mediating factor; a sort of amplifier of sound coming into the setting from the unconscious.

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[27] This idea is well established in the medical circles at the time. In fact, the great inventor of hysteria in the nineteenth century Jean-Martin Charcot, devotes his thesis for the professorship exam [*agrégation*] to the concept of expectation. See Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria*, p. 102.

Of course, the role of Anna O. in psychoanalytic history, the wire mesh of her conceptual/linguistic formulations onto which psychoanalysis will be able to spread its skin, whether in the form of the most enduring and significant theoretical contributions, or the general technical praxis, has been well documented and acknowledged (for instance, Ernst Jones in his biography of Freud, gives Anna O. credit, for precisely such contribution). My re-emphasis of this early dynamic was conducted with two points in mind: (1) as a reminder of its (or rather her) face, which in the annals of historical 'ingratitude' and 'weightlessness' often gets lost, becomes faceless, or simply assumes the one of Freud, and more importantly (2) to re-focus its features, which will take the form and the silhouette subsumed under the generality and impulse of expectation for a figure, in whose embodiment and 'sticky' surface, the entire fin de siècle context, is caught.

3. *Psychology of Expectation*

The historical 'habitus' of expectation is not the one of a subject, as the self caught in the context of modernity and its pathology, but more radically, the ubiquitous condition of having expectations *for* a psychology – the kind of anticipation inscribed in weather prognostications, or the prognosis for an illness.

Expectations submit to the uncertainty locked in the question of possession. They resonate with anticipation, but often are only the fulfillment of fear and loathing. Operating under the directive of possibility, they can just as quickly undermine it, when the resolution of their potential turns out to be otherwise from what had been anticipated; when the answer given is not what one wants or needs to hear. Freud falls under the imperative of this 'cast-iron butterfly' of expectation, its flight, its dynamics of feeling, quite blindly and unequivocally:

> I saw that my general prohibition has been ineffective and that I should have to take her frightening impressions away from her one by one. I took an opportunity of asking her, too, why she had gastric pains and what they came from… Her answer, which she gave rather grudgingly, was that she did not know. I requested her to remember by tomorrow. She then said in a definitely grumbling tone that I was not to keep asking her where this and that came from, but to let her tell me what she had to say (SE 2: 62–63).

This exchange took place between Freud and one of his first patients, Frau Emmy von N. It becomes something very typical. In spite of the fact, that at such an early stage (Freud analyzes the woman sometime in 1888 or 1889, and includes this case in the 1895 edition of *Studies on Hysteria*) all of this still appears quite naïve and even amateurish, the accentuation of the 'request' for a *correct* memory, and through it a *correct/corrected* psychology, will eventually find much more sophisticated, subtle and intricate expression, that lies at the heart of the psychoanalytic technique. But before that can happen, psychoanalysis must experience an early, infantile stage in its development, whose grotesque immaturity sucks its own intellectual thumb, for the suggestion (to understate this early form of psychoanalytic vaudeville, because we should really be describing it as a demand) and the expectation to remember, and remember truly (as it happens), takes on the distorted manifestation of physical/plastic and tactile form:

> My therapy consists in wiping away these pictures [of trauma], so that she is no longer able to see them before her. To give support to my suggestion I stroked her several times over the eyes (SE 2: 53).

This technique of expectation or insistence (as Freud also calls it) is supplemented not only by a likeability factor towards the patient,[28] but also Freud's infallibility:

> In these circumstances [of defence or resistance] I inform the patient that, a moment later, I shall apply pressure to his forehead, and I assure him that, all the time the pressure lasts, he will see before him a recollection in the form of a picture or will have it in his thoughts in the form of an idea occurring to him; and I pledge him to communicate this picture of idea to me, whatever it may be… Only in this manner can we find what we are in search of, but in this manner we shall find it infallibly (SE 2: 270).

All this now sounds quite comical to us, intimating a sort of strange alchemy of conjuration; of forcing, extracting gold out of the impurity of traumatic metallurgy. And, in fact, even Freud, in a large measure, discounts these early attempts at treatment. At the conclusion of his report on Frau Emmy von N.'s case, Freud appends an extensive footnote (one of the many in the main body of the text) which begins with these words:

> I am aware that no analyst can read this case history to-day without a smile of pity. But it should be borne in mind this was the first case in which I employed the cathartic procedure to a large extent (SE 2: 105).

But what happens later, in fact, could also be interpreted (as it indeed has been) with a smile of pity – although such later, and periodically obsequious assessments, are of little value within the frame of this discussion, since we are not trying to pass judgment on Freud's depth-psychology through the spectacles of its medical effectiveness, as a treatment. Rather, we are interested in the spectacle of its message in relation to the motivation (intellectual, social, historical) underpinning its phenomenon, thus instigating an encounter with its occurrence, in the first place.

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[28] In a remarkable passage, Freud indicates that he will not take on a patient whom he does not feel sympathetic towards: "I cannot imagine bringing myself to delve into the psychical mechanism of a hysteria in anyone who struck me as low-minded and repellent, and who, on closer acquaintance, would not be capable of arousing human sympathy…" (SE 2: 265).

What happens later, then, does not shed the identity of expectation and its particular sort of naïve 'clothing' – it simply prefects, sharpens and intellectualizes the procedure for its expression, displacing uncertainty and the gesture of its suggestion onto the fertile ground of deception via repression (*Verdrängung*). If expectation often disappoints in its outcome, deception is already a means of setback; a missed mark through dis-appointed possession, whose resolution, as soon as it happens, brings with it the positivity of finding a solution, even if intermittent. Hence, the issue here is not a specific psychology, whose validity rests in the particular and pain-staking development/enumeration of its contents (even when it seems like things operate to the contrary). Rather it is an issue of form, a psychological frame, an expectation not of fulfillment (of being filled-up, equipped with) but the expectation *of* a base condition, which must be owned-up to, found and acknowledged: the psychology of *namelessness*.

All of this is very counter-intuitive, not only in relation to Freud, but also to our current situation and its cult of particularity/uniqueness, enclosed in the name of modernity, whose historical confines we have tried to apprehend by so many nicknames in service of its definition. It is at this point, where the previously drafted and intimated connection between early psychoanalytic 'dramaturgy' and Schoenberg's first operatic monodrama, can serve as a sturdy 'work-bench' for further engagement with the material already presented and thus 'prefabricated'.

Apart from the year of its composition (1909) and the circumstances of its libretto, Schoenberg leaves us with very few reflective clues or analytical remarks about the work, that would provide ready-made openings, ripe for theoretical manipulation. It is easy to suppose that he preferred that the music speak for itself (to whatever extent that is possible). Before then, I will 'request' a different kind of memory from its history (I dare not say correct memory) here is what we do know.

The libretto is the result of an encounter between Schoenberg and Marie Pappenheim in Steinakirchen, in the late summer of 1909, although it is evident from Schoenberg's comments that he had already thought of composing an opera before then, and waited for an appropriate collaborative opportunity, in order to explore such possibility. That possibility presented itself in the person of Marie Pappenheim (Anna O's relative), whom Schoenberg met through a common acquaintance, and apparently engaged in the project.[29] There are conflicting reports as to what transpired next. Some commentators (Bekker, Buchanan)[30] relate that the central thematic idea was Schoenberg's, and that Pappenheim simply acted on his instructions. Others, such as Kirchmeyer who bases his conclusions on an interview conducted with Pappeheim shortly before her death, paints the opposite picture. According to this source, Schoenberg is believed to have said to Pappenheim: "Write me an opera text, Fräulein... Write what you want, I need an opera text", to which Pappenheim apparently responded:

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[29] For a detailed account of the circumstances that led to the libretto and the composition of the work, see Bryan R. Simms, *The Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg 1908–1923*, pp. 89–100. An extensive, book length form analysis of the opera is found in José Maria Garcia Laborda, *Studien zu Schönbergs Monodram "Erwartung" op. 17*.

[30] Bekker, P., *Schönberg: "Erwartung"*, in Arnold Schönberg zum 50 Geburtstag, 13 September, 1924. "Musikblätter des Anbruch VI, 8 – 9 (1924); Buchanan, R., *A Key to Schoenberg's "Erwartung" (op. 17)*, in JAMS XX, 3 (1967), quoted in Laborda, *Studien zu Schönbergs Monodram "Erwartung"*, p. 16.

"I can't write an opera text, at the most I can write a monodrama".[31] Whichever version we accept, and for the moment forget about the constantly circulating theme of belonging, ownership and expectation which has repeatedly been recycled in this text, just like the woman in *Erwartung* runs through a whole gamut of feelings as she moves through the forest,[32] the final result was that the entire work was composed very rapidly – it takes Schoenberg mere seventeen days to complete the entire score, after Pappeheim's delivery of the first draft of the text for which she needed three weeks.

If we are to believe Kirchmeyer's account,[33] Schoenberg adopts the text unreservedly, making very few changes. But these alterations, even if minor, where quite significant in their effect, given that they changed the entire slant of the narrative, removing it from the clinical case study of hysteria (what Pappenheim envisioned, being influenced by Breuer's and Freud's 1895 monograph) and throwing it into an ambiance of psychological mysticism. Perhaps it would not be a wrong assessment to say that, not unlike Freud, Schoenberg is circulating between the individual, clinical case of pathology, and the general description of the unconscious forces that motivate it. In this, he removes himself from the more practical, humanism of concern for the well being of one particular person[34], and instead elaborates the logic, behind the type of a human being, that all of a sudden proclaims itself, in the cloak of modernity.

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[31] In Laborda, *Studien zu Schönberg's Monodram "Erwartung"*, p. 16.

[32] The incorporation of the forest into the story, just like (as can be reasonably speculated) behind the Woman in the opera hides Anna O.'s experience, is taken from Pappenheim's own biography: "She experienced the forest two years prior, in Ischl, when, everyday around 10:30 at night, she had to walk through a stretch of dark woods home" (in Laborda, p. 17, my translation).

[33] Ibid., p. 16

[34] This seems to be what motivates Pappenheim, given her medical training and her politics of emancipation, as Bryan Simms points out: "Susceptibility to neurosis is the central subtext in Pappenheim's libretto. The Woman's [sic] predisposition to hysteria, Pappenheim tells us through the Woman's words, was caused by an excessive reliance upon her partner, by having yielded her independence. This concern,

The final copy of the music with words, bears the date of October 4, 1909, but the opera (after a series of failed attempts) must wait until June 6, 1924 (!) for its first performance in Prague during the festival of the International Society for New Music.

Erwartung enlists the already quite popular literary form of monodrama, whose main practitioner is a Swedish playwright August Strindberg.[35] The mono-dramatic form, revolves around a fundamental reduction of the world; first of all, a reduction into the shrunken dimensions of just one act, whose confines are meant to capture an event or a happening in their existential circumstances, by condensing them into a moment of intensity through the production of a divergent qualitative space; and secondly, a diminishment of the subject, in the act of appending/pinning him to that space, by disproportionately exaggerating the inner psychology, which in the process of development and literary/musical treatment, externalizes what is considered the essential, expressive element of the self – its emotionality and the confusion, violence, mistreatment and compulsion contained within its physical form. In this sense, given the structure of *Erwartung* as a monodrama, and its subject matter (a woman, passes through a forest at night, in search of her lover, whom she finally encounters, as a murdered body) this opera is, in a standard interpretation, associated with the general aura of Expressionism and consigned to the important and formative expressionist period in Schoenberg's oeuvre. Schoenberg himself confirms this, when years later he points out that: "In *Erwartung* the aim is to represent in 'slow motion' everything that occurs during

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as Simms further indicates, is a continually running theme in Pappenheim's later work, such as her 1949 novel *Der graue Mann* ("Whose Idea was *Erwartung*?", in *Constructive Dissonance, Arnold Schoenberg and the Transformations of Twentieth-Century Culture*, p. 103).

[35] As will fully emerge later on in our discussion, Strindberg constitutes one of the most important creative influences in Schoenberg's work. In a 1909 letter to Alban Berg, Schoenberg writes: "Just see that you don't take the *Dream Plays* away from me, for I'm considering them myself. But some other Strindberg work! I consider that very feasible! (in Joseph Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader*, p. 117).

a single second of maximum spiritual excitement, stretching it out to half an hour".[36] Thus, expressionism in general as well as Schoenberg's *Erwartung* (including his other opera from the same period *Die glückliche Hand*) are associated with the prevailing *psychologization*, not only of the self, but also and especially of the space around that self. Whereas on the surface, there is nothing wrong with such an assessment, apart perhaps from the fact that we have settled very comfortably into its dimensions, I also wonder if there is something more to this, if there is something more that we can say about it. In order to do so, we will have to treat the signification of Expressionism in some detail below, all along reflecting on the sound (historical as well as specifically musical) enclosed in the texture and work of its expansion and formulation.

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[36] Leonard Stein, ed., *Style and Idea*, p. 105.

4. Vibrations of the Theme

One of the most rigorous commentaries on the phenomenon of Expressionism[37] (Figure 1, Appendix) comes from the Austrian-born critic and writer, Hermann Bahr,[38] also a vociferous adherent of the Viennese Secession. Historically speaking, Bahr should be thought of as the fin de siècle's version of a self-proclaimed Socratic 'gadfly', although perhaps not on such a philosophically sophisticated level. He seeks out and assumes the function of a catalyst, constructing his persona in exactly such a facilitation-conscious manner, which has something of Freud in its analytical and polemical functionality. The latter eventually takes over Bahr's life completely, as is evident from the correspondence to his father, who was always suspicious of Bahr's high-wire act of taking on the responsibility for total and almost absurd reformatory message directed towards not only the Austrian or German culture, but the entire human civilization.[39]

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[37] As Luigi Rognoni points out in *The Second Vienna School – Expressionism and Dodecaphony*, expressionism arose in Germany around the turn of the century, started maturing and identifying itself as such around 1910, and withering around 1925. Of course any such mark up of borderlines is always somewhat arbitrary and should be taken with caution, not to mention the differences of time-lines and theoretical self-definitions in painting, music and literature. Literary expressionism, for instance, is practically absent from Viennese modernism, but early forms of painterly expressionism (through Schiele and Kokoschka, especially) as well as musical expressionism (through Schoenberg) are quite markedly present, with lines of influence running from van Gogh and Rodin in the case of Schiele (see Patrick Werker ed. *Egon Schiele: Art, Sexuality, and Viennese Modernism*, especially the essays by Albert Elsen and Almut Krapf-Weiler) and Strindberg as well as Dehmel, in the case of Schoenberg. Rognoni also gives this very interesting genealogy of the term, in a footnote, tracing it at least in part, back to Wilhelm Worringer, who at one point will emerge in an important supporting role in our narrative: "Wilhelm Worringer (in an essay on Cézanne, Van Gogh and Matisse published in 1911 in the literary review, *Der Sturm*) was the first to use 'expressionism' as a critical term. However, some historians also attribute the term to Julien-Auguste Hervé, who used it with reference to a group of his own paintings on view at the 1907 'Salon des Indépends' in Paris. Still others recall that during a Jury meeting of the second 'Berlin Secession' someone asked, with regard to a painting by Max Pechstein, if it was also 'impressionism', 'No! Expressionism! was the reply. In any case, 'expressionism', as an aesthetic and critical term, came into use only after 1910" (Rognoni, p. 25).

Hermann Bahr's *Expressionismus*, written just before WWI and published as a journal article in 1916 and in a book form only in 1920, comes obviously towards the end of the movement as a historical phenomenon, but it is applicable for our purposes because it itself serves as a general, philosophical commentary on the turn of the century, whose energetic appearance, in one of its instances, takes place through the movement known as Expressionism.

[38] Hermann Bahr was one of the most reliable and honest supporters of Schoenberg, in the very often fickle intellectual circles of Vienna: "Among the Viennese writers at that time Hermann Bahr was like a prophet of the new spirit. In all fields of art he helped and propagated the position which was called Sezessionistic [sic]. He encouraged youth and attacked convention; he was an Austrian who understood the European mission of his country… Bahr knew Schoenberg at that time from his Viennese performances and scandals. He helped him artistically and as a person. He had set up a foundation for the support of fighting artists, to which many rich Viennese gave their services and money" (Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, p. 98 and 143).

Bahr's commentary on expressionism revolves around the question of meaning, of finding oneself in the upheaval of confusion that any in-the-moment situation brings with it, naturally, but is especially exaggerated when that moment is robbed of its figurative sense of accessibility, as was increasingly the case in the early 20th century. Having no choice but to give up the late Romantic rationality of emotional, social and political *Steigerung* (elevation, whether as a class movement or the aesthetic principle of beauty), the setting of fin de siècle modernity is no longer under the directive to maintain itself according to the well established and clearly stated rules of the bourgeois society. More radically, it is burdened with the responsibility for new, progressive and universal definitions, which do not deal as much with the everyday and its restless disquiet of increasingly strained demarcations, but rather with the whirl-pools of figuring out, and figuring 'man' into a collection of signs, which can give what only signs can provide – value. The entire question of modernism, especially the Viennese modernism, rests (to use Marx's language) on the reinvention, maybe even the discovery, of use-value at the expanse of the bourgeois network of exchange-values.

The type of modernity we are speaking of, is a curious blend of ambiguous and nameless forces (whose best exponent is perhaps the Freudian unconscious), which are not necessarily organized in the spirit of progressive invention, or out of hand denigration of the past, as is generally believed, but rather circulate around the question of

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[39] See, for instance, Reinhard Farkas, introduction to *Hermann Bahr: Prophet der Moderne*, especially pp. 25–36.

accessibility to a layer of experience which had always been there, but could not find a means of expression. An attempt is made to unify experience and vault over the mesh of tightening ensnarement in values which become increasingly exchangeable and worthless. Such accessibility is wrapped around the issue of memory; of trying to re-discover its pre-historic contents and thus counter the onset of amnesia. The indicators of this, what we might call, indistinct presence, are semantically inscribed into the fin de siècle's *Ur*-formulations, as in *Ur-schrei* (primordial/primal cry), *Ur-trieb* (primal drive), *Ur-grund* (primal/primordial ground or condition), *Ur-mensch* (primal/primordial man/humanity) or even the *Ur-laut* (primal, indistinct sound).[40] All these are employed in the service of a new and unprecedented *Weltanschauung*, whose topography and tendency, at one point create their own elevation and sloping, the pitch of this entire 'turn of' (turn of the century, of art, music, subject etc.) narrative; an arousal and deployment of factuality that speaks to, what André Breton calls 'slope-facts' and 'cliff-facts'.[41]

It is a factuality that slopes and drifts, descends and ascends, all the while carefully balancing is steps as close to the edge as is possible, with the real chance and acceptance of the danger of actually going over. Such factuality is able to live the fear of its own inversion and potential implosion because it is not concerned with impressions anymore (as we will see below, Bahr sets up his discussion of Expressionism against the background of the just overcome Impressionism). In other words, this factuality, whose trade-mark used to be the rationality locked in the purely visual mechanics of seeing and display (publicity of an image without imagination, hence also the politics of imaging) has forgotten its senses. This also means that expression is a counteracting move against the measured mechanics of motion which the standard of well-tempered and calibrated perception (we can think here of musical harmony and painterly perspective as exemplary) carries with it. Instead, phenomena acquire a topographically-surveyed gait which makes it a priority to step over the safety margins, thus inadvertently and indefinitely, turning the comfort of their reassurance into a scenario of anxiety. It is a rebellion against the technological dissolution of margins in the containment field of functionality. Thus, such a rebellious act is not so much directed against what we are used to as the target in most interpretations of modernism, i.e., the world of cogs, levers and pulleys, but a reaction which, in its rage, is almost exclusively turned towards and against the body – its sensorium, the deceptive and mystical technology of organic sanctum and the plagiarism of spirituality it effectuates.

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[40] See Luigi Rognoni, *The Second Vienna School, Expressionism and Dodecaphony*, pp. 1–2.
[41] See Breton's *Nadja*.

The contradiction here, its placement, coalesces in the act of eliminating the body as the target and expression of functionality – the most effective way of rendering technology impotent, since one erases the centre that first engenders and then re-absorbs it. This is accomplished by turning the body into a target of aesthetics; aesthetics as *analysis* (not as the transcendental ideal of beauty) which renders, splints and fragments. This is the only spectrum through which the call for the 'new spirituality' or the 'new man' at the turn of the century can be made some sense of. There are countless literary and polemical examples in these short few decades of Viennese and European modernism, of precisely such cry initiated by its philosophical patriarch – Nietzsche. Bahr repeats it, just a mere two and a half pages into his treatise on Expressionism. Speaking of his resistance to the position of inclination towards such new expressionist message, given the fact that, as he says: "I grew up with Impressionism. I was an

Impressionist before I knew one".[42] Bahr does nonetheless overcome it, by convincing himself: "You must learn to find yourself in it…new men are there, they bring the new time what it needs…" (*Expressionismus*, p. 11, my translation). What they bring the new time is nothing less than a new *emotive ground* out of which everything else should find a way of growing.

The operational functionality of that time borders on the parabola of mythology which makes the past vibrate according to a different range of frequencies:

> I prefer … simply to show, in what strange situation the clueless friend of art sees himself today, how this newest art affects him, what in it elevates him, why he believes himself threatened and what threatens him in it, and what it wants, why it wants it and if it does not, perhaps want something, what now must be wanted, perhaps even something, what has long been wanted, so that in this ultra-new the arch-old of humanity can once again be recognized (ibid., p. 12, my translation).

We can, of course, recognize Freud here – the Freud of *Totem and Taboo* with its primal horde and the killing of the Father, the Freud of *Civilization and its Discontents* and its thesis of repression, the Freud of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* with the primacy of the death drive, as well as the Freud of *Moses and Monotheism* with its strange, fictional history. All these texts aim at establishing the memory and the heritage of humanity in its modern form by way of a recovery and reinvention – they are its reconstructions and ultimately the legitimating archive for the immanence of its present expression. This is not something unique to Freud[43] but is the general adage of modernism, the thesis under which it operates; modernism, which alight a foot (Figure 2, Appendix) nonetheless tries to leave a new print, by not simply *looking* to the past, but through the identification of its anchoring, re-inscribe its memory which would be shattering to the moment as co-presence, releasing 'the now' in all its impulsivity. The uniqueness of this 'historical' outlook devoid of historiography (in the standard meaning of the term), but full of *bio*graphy, finds its origins in the idea and force of *plasticity*.

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[42] Bahr, *Expressionismus*, p. 10, my translation, hereafter cited in text.

[43] Freud displays a very strange, even a neurotic, relationship to the thought of others, who might have already said, in a large measure, what he is proposing. He acknowledges this state of affairs in places (even though rarely), only to ignore the topic later, as is the case with Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, for example. On the general theme of ideas which construct a direct line of heritage to Freud, see Lancelot Law Whyte, *The Unconscious Before Freud* and Ludger Lütkehaus, ed., *Dieses Wahre Innere Afrika*. The latter source is a compilation of excerpts from original philosophical texts dealing with the concept of the unconscious in the preceding 200 years or so before Freud.

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It is Nietzsche who, in one of his earliest works, deals precisely with the *matter* of history, under which we seem to be relentlessly moulded and whose confines we might want to escape, but cannot. Hence the title of this work takes on the outline of the entire argument: *Of the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life*.[44] Nietzsche's message is one of caution and strategy. Despite the situation of repression, where a certain amount of the past is pushed aside in favour of linear representations as historical facts, the exuberance of the human civilization is nonetheless inescapably bound with it. Given this, the only solution is to use the past, while handling it with care. Such use-value is created in and through the force that is always and from the start inherent in history: the force of plasticity, renewal and condensation into a form that can be put into our hands (handled):

> In order to determine this degree of sleeplessness [as history] and, through that, the borderline at which the past must be forgotten if it is not to become the gravedigger of the present, one has to know precisely how great the *plastic force* of a person, a people, or a culture is. I mean that force of growing in a special way out of oneself, of reshaping and incorporating the past and the foreign, of healing wounds, compensating for what has been lost, rebuilding shattered forms out of one's self.[45]

This exercise of memory and forgetting, their mutual reinforcement, is in fact almost point by point, the procedure used by Freud to handle his patients and their biographies, which, for treatment to be effective, must be deposited in Freud's hands and sculpted. Now, this sort of plasticity as an agent which can be controlled and moulded is achieved only by stepping away from the organic, while preserving its elastic nucleus. It is a way of extracting the core of the body, its genius (the concept of genius is also of insistent resonance in the modernist narrative) from the physical and cultural limitations of the biological organism and the bourgeois processing of its confines; a way of discarding it and making it insignificant as an obstacle. It is a search, which moves away even from the heretofore most sophisticated definition of 'man', because man, even the wisest of his species is "…a mere conflict and cross between plant and ghost".[46]

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[44] Nietzsche, *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben*.

[45] Ibid., p. 10, my translation.

The radical forcefulness of the *Jahrhundertwende* modernity, its irresistible field of attraction, as well as its extreme identity, find placement in the search precisely for a typology that would support the 'new man' and his 'humanity' – a version of Nietzsche's *Übermensch*. This is why, it is also the age of the manifesto and the *expectation* locked in its literary form which becomes literal/real, precisely because the 'looked for' is a *manifestation* of life in an entirely new universe.[47] But it is important not to fall back into the reflexive, standard assessment of this time, as the hour of great contempt or renewal, simply and purely. Rather, as I will continue to build my thesis, the contempt-renewal dichotomy, should be understood as a tool in the project of an attempted reconstruction of very intense and immense proportions – the most profound rendering (in the sense of presentation and mauling) of the subject, since the time of Descartes. For what is there once the subject has moved through the condition of being the 'insignificant body' (religious body as non-entity, as the non-base for experience) and its definitional outgrowth as the stage of being a 'split body', the 'docile body', the 'disciplined/technologized body or the hygienic/purified sexual body?[48] What is there left after this progression which takes place over the preceding centuries? Perhaps only this: that now all of a sudden we are faced with the subject *without a body* – a bodiless organic mass, whose compensation for this lack of corporeality, is found in the *aesthetics of plasticity*, which is extended to everything around and which ultimately has no name, or perhaps only the type of name that one finds in naming the body as matter, or the reality as phenomenology or objectivity. Could this be the reason why art is put in the position of *living* and of being *alive* in the everyday as its only currency, its use-value and meaning – the spirit of practically all artistic/intellectual movements of the time, from the Viennese Secession, onwards?

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[46] Nietzsche, *Zarathustra*, p. 13.

[47] For an excellent anthology of some of the most significant manifestos written around that time, and well into the last century, see Mary Ann Caws, ed., *Manifesto – A Century of Isms*.

The reality of this disengaged modernism is a divorced materiality, of which the most effective and drastic expression, due to its most extreme 'natural' plasticity/elasticity, is sound. This is why sound, its idea, its metaphor, image and the amplitude of its tone, infiltrates almost every other mode of artistic expression, including (what is especially interesting) psychoanalysis, thus giving it the ambiguous identity of eroticized/aesthetic science. It is not a surprise then, that Kandinsky, for instance, falls back onto the receptivity of sound to explicate the theory of colour, where ultimately music and painting collapse onto each other, or maybe more accurately, find themselves in each other's arms – the grip that binds as it blinds, since now, one is supposed to *hear* colour as well as see it.

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[48] This line of progression, is more or less contained in Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish, Madness and Civilization* and *The History of Sexuality*.

5. The Groundlessness of the Body and the Grounding of Arguments

The loss of ground or grounding which Bahr is at such pains to explain through the phenomenon of expressionism, is the case of phenomenological erosion, which as we know, had already been prepared some decades earlier by Nietzsche. This loss of centre, or perhaps better yet, de-centering of the subject and through it a decomposition of the body and its sensory 'machine', is an educational project, a new approach towards the context of how 'things' are perceived. What is thus proposed, is the fulfillment and the final accentuation of what Nietzsche, for instance, calls for in his *historical philosophy*; a release point which, through its drifting perspective, gives up the worship of form as 'man':

> All philosophers have the common failing of starting out from man as he is now and thinking they can reach their goal through an analysis of him. They involuntarily think of 'man' as an *aeterna veritas*, as something that remains constant in the midst of all flux, as a sure measure of things. Everything the philosopher has declared about man is, however, at bottom no more than a testimony as to the man of a *very limited* period of time. Lack of historical sense is the family failing of all philosophers; many, without being aware of it, even take the most recent manifestations of man, such as has arisen under the impress of certain religions, even certain political events, as the fixed form from which one has to start out. They will not learn that man has become, that the faculty of cognition has become; while some of them would have it that the whole world is spun out of this faculty of cognition.[49]

Cognition, of course, is also and primarily spun-out of not only the wilful application of consciousness harnessed to the act of being cognate, but also out of the entire range of human, biologically endowed sensorium, which 'man' must disable, in the end, to overcome himself and his own limit. The way towards the overcoming of this limit, acquires (at least as an intermediary stage) the expressive modification of taste through aesthetics, which works with the purpose of re-arranging the dullness, heritage, convention, convenience and apathy of our senses. In this way, the entire project of modernism becomes a manifesto, or a workshop for the production of *new* taste that would be responsive/reactive and not reactionary/reflective as it had been, paying homage to intellectual and artistic education of the previous sensibility:

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[49] Nietzsche, *Human All Too Human*, p. 13.

> He, who has taste, immediately says yes or no, before he himself knows why. He, who has taste, will be overwhelmed by pleasure or disgust, without being able to help it… [but] what we today call taste is merely comprised of [cultivated] memories...[50]

To illustrate this argument, we can go back to the very interesting metaphor already mentioned, found in Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, which compares 'man', even the most elaborately constructed 'man', to something that spans the interval between a plant and a ghost. The educational/cultural cultivation makes us grow fully into the mechanism of Cartesian 'dualism' and its split between the mind and the body, thus always rearing us in the direction of the ghostly part, as 'men' who are informed by thought, the most human of all elementary defining traits. The paradoxical consequence that arises at the same time as the prestige of thinking advances beyond its humble beginnings, is the creation of the trough of efficiency and hence eventually, reduction of the body in its dimensions, given that its potentiality is disciplined by instrumental rationality – a rationality that is in the service of preserving thought and its 'natural reason' at all cost.

The body is truly at fault in Cartesian philosophy, not so much because it is a physical substance, but because it is an *imperfect*, *composite* and ultimately *divisible* materiality[51] (i.e., materiality as objectivity and not pure thought), which generates a fundamental deception as to its 'truth' and 'reason' – its own identity; or said closer to Descartes' idiom, its fault lies in the fact that through it we cannot see clearly and distinctly. This is why, reason, the way Descartes attempts to formulate it, is not a purely reductive, instrumental formula of scientific thinking (the way we tend to summarize it, even though such summary already constitutes a historical reformulation and an essential corruption of Descartes' ideology) but a certain, curious mysticism of doubt and uncertainty, of metaphysical immanent materialism which is self-affective and thus the underlying cause of the things immediately perceivable. The problem is not the antagonism between our seeming perceptive insufficiency and the deeper hence true thought. The correct view is found from the beginning in *unison*; in our ability not so much to conceive of an arrangement that is more perfect than what we are by necessity resigned to experience (because all conceiving or conception is already a second-order construct in Descartes) but experience a materiality that is fundamental as this *potential* which then gives rise to everything else as it is later represented – a formula whose condensed form is the famous *cogito ergo sum* (I think therefore I am).

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[50] Bahr, *Expressionismus*, pp. 20–21, my translation.

[51] It is such imperfection, fragmentation and divisibility, this spoiled part of objectivity, that fin de siècle uses (to anticipate the progression of our argument a little) in its attempted discovery of another range of empiricism, which is neither governed purely by the senses, nor falling back into abstract thought. This is why Freud considers dreams, as not phantasmagoric illusions, but another layer of experience, of reality and factuality.

The curiosity of Descartes' approach, is found in his extreme methodology of doubtfulness, which in a twisted, circular way leads to utmost certainty. Because, after everything objective and physical, including and especially the body and its senses, has been discounted, and yet, one cannot deny that the self still exists, precisely because it doubts, then the only conclusion as to the source of such existence becomes nothing less than the power to be cognizant of that doubt, of thinking even when that thinking sees only uncertainty and nothingness (at its most extreme) around it. Another way of trying to understand this is: even though every extension of thinking is in itself imperfect and very doubtful, the fact that thought is applied at all and that it is able to think this imperfection, question it and be suspicious of it, in itself constitutes the only definition of truth. In Descartes' own words:

> Although it is not immediately apparent that so general a doubt can be useful, it is in fact very much so, since it delivers us from all sorts of prejudices and makes available to us an easy method of accustoming our minds to become independent of the senses ... the mind, which in its intrinsic freedom supposes that everything which is open to the least doubt is nonexistent, recognizes that it is nevertheless absolutely impossible that it does not itself exist (Descartes, *Meditations*, p. 71).

As is well known, this epistemological principle opens a direct line of communication to roughly 200 years of German idealism as well as Hume's type of reactionary empiricism against pure thought, which, curiously enough, ends up with a tattered philosophy of extreme empirical scepticism.[52] The first of these elevates thought and its spirit, the second the sensory impression, to the highest principle of existential maintenance, all along conscripting the body into the bare minimum of sufficiency and sustenance, only as much as is required in support of the more perfect, in itself unknowable but in the cunning of its manifestation, undisputable reason. Of course, in many ways all this is a gross oversimplification, because the type of extreme Cartesian dualism that we like to reference almost instinctively is not a dualism at all, but a complex singular level of perception that would provide the raw-materials out of which any experience and phenomenon in its ek-stasis (externalization) can find itself. What is known as the dualistic version of this formula rests on the exaggerated elevation of awareness and consciousness into limits beyond which they were never meant to go, i.e., the limits of the clearly defined and conscripted internality, in whose internment thought, if it wants to remain pure, must operate. In this sense, the outside world, speaking formally, does not exist for Descartes, although practically even he is not able to ignore it. Hence it is these two moments that are already enclosed in the immanent singularity of consciousness, working to subvert each other and pre-mark the later expression of Descartes' philosophy of consciousness in the subject/object philosophy and beyond.

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[52] Hume's radical skepticism, concerns what he thinks is impossible to derive via the route of impressions, i.e., causality of the type where 'A causes B'. At most, what can be said is that A and B provide a conjunction or a juxtaposition of factors, which is based on expectation, habit, sequence and association: in short, all the elements which, as we will see, are used by the fin de siècle modernity, albeit for different purposes. The task and the consequence of these associative-elements is not the "destruction of empiricism" (neither is it the object and the effect of Hume's philosophy) but, on the contrary, its reinvention through what is already present in Hume's thought, expectation and potentiality. For a good synopsis of Hume's philosophy see Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*. Hume's argument is contained in his *Treatise of Human Nature*.

It is the underside or the underbelly of such a singularity that is most interesting, in the context of our narrative, since it already intimates the idea of the unconscious force that will later find its way into Freud through the heritage of the German continental philosophy which itself acquires its bearings through this Cartesian mark of modernity, but then displaces thought or 'natural reason' from its primacy, making it subject to an influence beyond the immediacy of its expression, i.e., influenced by something that is even beyond its control, which means beyond the range of its awareness, as is for example the case with Schopenhauer's concept of the Will.[53]

In any case, not to get entangled in this philosophical setting too much (even though it is important to establish some general outlines of what Viennese modernism, via Nietzsche and his response, reacts to) it can be safely said, that since Descartes' bold philosophy of 'out-of-bounds' materiality and generic doubt as to its objectification possibilities, much of what defines Western philosophy in the two centuries that follow, is an attempt to bridge the cleft between the mind and the body, expressed most generally through the problematic of subject and object. This is what Kant attempts through his uncoupling of knowledge and phenomenal reality, what Hegel struggles with as the phenomenology of spirit, and what Nietzsche reacts against in his attempt at nothing less, than a reanimation and reinvigoration of the body; a philosophy whose most urgent necessity works towards reclaiming of space for it, by giving it the type of Dionysian exuberance, that would express its own kind of doubt-driven truth; an imperfection, if still that, that completes the body in the excess of its design taken to the limit. But what can be seen in all this early modern philosophical play of 'the blind leading the blind', is that in spite of the resentment or the ambiguity that the body generates towards its own presence, it has to be preserved, if not at all costs, then surely at the modicum of minimal cost, depending on the idealism its biology is harnessed to, employed in support of. Such irrational maintenance and overburdening of the body in the name of rationalism of truth has, of course, always been evident at its most intense position in religion, especially Christianity.

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[53] For a fully worked out line of intellectual/philosophical heritage that leads through Descartes to the configuration of phenomena that identify themselves as psychoanalytic thought, see Michel Henry *The Genealogy of Psychoanalysis*, who in a very sophisticated manner draws out the implications, confusions and entanglement of the philosophy of the *ego* as *cogito* stemming from Descartes and ending in the Freudian contraption of the unconscious.

The technique of sensual reprimand, as Nietzsche astutely observes, works on the basis of morality and the *ressentiment* inscribed in it, which rages against the body, intervenes mechanically and treats its physique as an automaton which must be continually fine tuned and purged in an attempt to prepare it for another reality. It is here, that we must understand Nietzsche's own philosophical rage, not simply as a way to despise religion and its spirituality, but precisely the opposite: as action which means to expose the false spirituality inherent in it, as a spiritual deception, because the spiritual here is actually the carnal in another form. Such religious morality of carnally-oriented resentment permeates all contexts of human existence, where the Christian religion had been able to take hold and in order to fight the battle for its liberation, one has to return to the ground zero, the notion of spirituality and its expression. And this is the point, where as we have seen, the idea of new taste, new humanity, or what Nietzsche refers to as the 'good European' comes into the forefront, and is already, quite matter of fact, built into Bahr's entire argument for and his assessment of Expressionism, as well as the glue which connects all the seemingly divergent currents of the Viennese modernism.

If "the ascetic ideal has not only ruined health and taste [but] has also ruined a third, fourth, fifth, sixth thing as well...",[54] because it inspires fear, anxiety and repression in 'man' by affecting his senses and through these the created affectivity of feeling, then the call for a new sense of taste as an opposing principle that would finally unite the inner and the outer in some kind of performative operational structure, (as opposed to privileging one or the other) is the only possible solution to the crisis of spirituality – a crisis that the Viennese modernism identified clearly and felt acutely. The unique solution that lies at hand, that is presented to us via the fin de siècle project of reclamation, is an activity of continually re-defining and specifying the work of the *bodiless subject*.

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[54] Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, p. 145.

6. *Play of the Senses*

The kind of modernity circa 1900 we have set out to investigate is a tattered, self-mutilating and 'senseless' reality. Its *sens*, to use the French equivalent, gives us access to and intimates both reason and directionality. In describing it as senseless, I want to emphasize and draw attention to the self-contradictory play of forces circulating through its 'nervous system'; a politics which is not in the business of administration but *creation* of messages, or formulated still differently, a politics which is not to be interpreted and viewed through the traditional association of its dimensions with a bureaucratic system but more radically, with *hermeneutics*. And in this sense, such politics falls under the general realm of depth, not unlike Freud's depth-psychology, and its specific brand of aesthetics, which generates messages and sets up an entire methodology of symbolism.

The message, in spite of its 'senselessness', is serious. It constantly attempts to find a new direction, by giving up and losing the old, well-trodden ways. In this, it must become irrational, in order to re-invent rationality through a resolution of the question pertaining to the subject where the raging dichotomy of its ethical reinforcement or total and exuberant release, must be patched-up by other means. Both of these initial responses of reinforcement or release, operate on the premise of offensive manipulation, whereas what transpires at the turn of the century is encapsulated in the idea of being defenceless, of losing resistance (quite an obvious assessment if we think in terms of Freudian psychoanalytic technique). Hermann Bahr summarizes this assessment quite well, when he refers to the modern self whose: "…main characteristic used to be resistance [but] today his main characteristic is defencelessness" (Bahr, *Expressionismus*, p. 24, my translation). Bahr's conclusion is not exactly accurate, since the paradigm of losing resistance and rendering oneself defenceless, is not a *fait accompli*, but a process where the two components interpenetrate each other, exchanging leads. Where this modality works at its most concentrated moments, of course, is psychoanalysis since becoming readjusted to and part of a reality, is premised on giving up previous definitions which were built on reclusive remembering. This is the way of synchronizing one's subjective presence with the seemingly chaos-driven timelessness of forces beyond one's control. And this is why, the question that arises in all its irresistibility and inescapability is this: "*Was ist überhaupt 'echt'?*" (ibid., p. 33) – what is really authentic? This question applies not only to art, but also and especially to the 'typography' of man in a new category, which must redress the entire expanse of reality. As we go on to reformulate and continually specify its parameters, it will become apparent that the dimension of genuineness circulates around the idea of *the virtual* as a certain architectural extension of the physical, whose continual survival and vitality depends on redesigning the senses. This means both, the loss of their general bio/social characteristics, as well as the development of new ones through displacement and dislocation, perhaps best encapsulated by Schoenberg, who at one point concludes that his 'music' can only be heard when the recipient develops *new ears* for its reception – a theme of sensual rearrangement that characterizes much of what is at stake in Viennese modernism.

The question of the genuine experience accompanied by loss and redistribution, in its expectation and symptom, points towards a certain blurring of language. Speaking of the Expressionist painting, Bahr concludes that: "It is not merely about art… [the expressionists] paint a new philosophy, a new religion [and] the release of humanity" (ibid., p. 39, my translation). The scale of such project automatically must involve a linguistic crisis (and much, if not all, of Viennese modernism falls under its burden), which, apart from being a side-effect, is also necessary and deliberately pursued because its prevalence and forth-coming is an indication of an attempt to express something non-conventional and without an example (*beispiellos*). One thus falls into a type of linguistic apathy, which in its carelessness is still communicative: "[If] obscure speech [dunkle Rede] angers the listener, he does not like to hear the clear one, or overhears it; that means, when truth is made too easy, too comfortable for him, then in turn he does not pay attention to it" (ibid., pp. 45–46, my translation). Attention is the key condition because it is the way one must dispense and dispose of it, refocusing the sense-organs and their culturally moulded and biologically endowed organization, which provides reconnaissance of the body, its interdiction (via symptom building) and its potential release (via the removal of all that is repressive and resistant). And if we are to take stock of Freud and Schoenberg, then the most efficient description would perhaps be that all the complexity inherent in the oeuvre of both, can be reduced to an attempt at finding and redefining the way one can and should *pay attention*; seeing oneself in the hermeneutic mirror of not only how messages are to be interpreted, but how they are constructed through the act of interpretation.[55] It is then not at all surprising that Bahr's next question, after asking what is it that we can call genuine, asks simply: "What is seeing?" (*Was ist sehen?*).

Bahr's discussion about the 'nature' and the phenomenon of 'seeing', builds towards what will later emerge as an interesting merging of the senses – the hybrid

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[55] For a very interesting and compelling discussion of how Western modernity since the 19th century, starts to define experience in terms of how one pays attention, and the vicissitudes as well as corruptions associated with it (like the phenomenon of distraction which becomes an important concept in some of the most famous critiques of modernity, especially that of Benjamin through his 'loss of aura') see Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture.*

Augenmusik, or the music of the eyes. The road leading towards this very curious formulation is quite straight forward. According to Bahr, "the entire history of painting is always a history of seeing" (ibid., p. 51, my translation). But it is not a simple history, because seeing is not equivalent to vision, and this already implies a removal from the immediacy of the moment of perception as looking, thus unearthing a kind of artistic ability to see into a layer of depth beneath appearance. Thus, the quality of such a look is not simply sensory/mechanical, but rather intellectual, releasing the apparatus of an eye which thinks, from the 'autism' of mere sense impressions: "That is why, the entire history of painting is also the history of philosophy, especially the unwritten one" (ibid., p. 51, my translation). This type of seeing proposes a resolution of the inside/outside split between the mind and the body, once again splicing together what became known as the Cartesian division:

> Two forces produce an effect, one upon the other, one outer and one inner, both basically unknown to us. By itself neither is sufficient. Appearance is created through both of these together. It is different for everyone, according to his own weaker and stronger interest, the activity of his eyes, the weight of his experience, the strength of his thought, the reach of his knowledge. When one of these conditions change, every appearance must change with it. Most of the time man is not at all conscious of these conditions. But it can also happen that he feels them strongly then it can also transpire that he wants to change them. As soon as he becomes aware that his seeing is always an effect of an outer and his inner force, it becomes an issue of what he trusts more, the outside world or his own self. In the end, all human affairs are determined that way. As soon as he is at the point where he learns to differentiate between his own self and the world, where he says I and you, where he divides the outer and the inner, he has only one choice, either he flees from the world into himself or flees out of his own self into the world, or finally he remains at the border between the two; these are the three positions of men towards appearance (ibid., pp. 54–55, my translation).

The third and the last of these subjective positions is the solution that the turn of the century Viennese modernism produces, to reform perception and seeing, without the previously necessary step of also reconstituting the subject in a supporting role. Because the task now, is not simply to use what is given and decide in favour of mind or body, but to *add* to the sensory machine, thus extending the senses in new, unusual and unexpected ways. Anything less than that will replicate the inflexibility of the old dualism, because this type of adversarial system always takes as the starting point the limited possibility of reconciliation into account first and foremost, whereas the age of new spirituality of the most recent, hyper-modernism (including our present, which finds its founding mysticism in the fin de siècle) comes forth through the opposite premise: it acknowledges the impossibility of the body to reconcile itself with what faces it, whether medically, socially or psychologically, and instead constructs engineered ways of delay, of displacing the moment when the body and its habitus come face to face and thus into the anxiety of rising expectations.

This is how the contrast between the classical age (the type of 'man' engendered by it) and modern consciousness emerges:

> There comes the classical man, who, as Goethe says, "thinks himself one with the world and that is why he perceives the outside world not as something foreign that enters into the inner world of man, but rather he finds the corresponding images of his sensations in it. Since then, the entire history of the West merely develops such classical man. In the meantime, there always arise memories of pre-history that worrisomely threaten the classical evolution; it remains stronger (ibid., p. 60, my translation).

As we learn from Foucault,[56] the classical subjectivity, in its constitution, operates according to the progressively accentuated principles of resemblance, representation and classification, all in the effort to find a commensurable reflection of what that subjectivity sees in the outside world and its order. All these moments of knowing depend on a very specialized and highly developed mechanics of seeing; the perspective imbued, objective look of a purely mechanized eye. We are already familiarized with an assessment, especially in the post WWII cultural theory which, to a large extent, denigrates the type of world view the classical look produces[57] and we find something similar in Hermann Bahr:

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[56] See Foucault, *The Order of Things*.

> [The classical look] is the look of trust towards nature. Man turns himself more and more away from his innateness towards the outside. He becomes more and more the eye. And the eye becomes more and more perceiving, and progressively less negotiable. The eye does not have its own will any more, it loses itself in the stimulus, until in the end it becomes completely passive, nothing more than a pure echo of nature. Goethe still asked: "What is looking without thinking?" Since then, we have lived it. We can now answer his question and say to him, what it is: Impressionism.
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> Impressionism actually is the completion of the classical man. What the impressionist looks for in seeing, as far as this is still somehow possible, is to separate everything that man can bring into the stimulus of his own accord. The impressionist is that attempt, to leave nothing of man but the surface network. One is obliged to remind the Impressionists that they do not "carry through" a picture. It would be more correct to say: they do not carry out seeing … and the impressionist mistrusts man, just like the prehistoric man mistrusts nature … he goes back to the first, initialization of seeing, he wants to see the stimulus in us at its first entrance… (ibid., pp. 61–61, my translation).

A page later, the summary conviction of Impressionism reads: "It is the gaze of a time, which trusts only the senses, but is mistaken as to all the other powers of man" (ibid., p. 63, my translation).

But contrary to Bahr, it can be argued that Impressionism retrieves the truth of vision, by registering the elementary imaging of the light stimulus, as it is really seen by the internal apparatus of the retina, thus giving us a more valuable, more 'information nurtured' set of data, whose potential lies precisely in its non-formative aspects, about which a decision still has to be made. In this sense, the image thus presented, by bestowing upon us the power of decision we normally do not have (since in the eye all this happens involuntarily and instantly), and giving us the option of entering a state which normally is but an impulse of a relay-station, also dispenses the possibility of existing in a space usually unavailable, and thus existing 'otherwise than'. Yet Bahr is quite unequivocal in his judgment. The fault of Impressionism, its artificiality and deception, lies not so much in its technique but in the fact that it considers what it pictures as understanding of the human condition, thinking that the latter can be simply reduced to a network of sense-impressions which make 'man' one with the world, just as we have seen, Classicism proposes to do: "The impressionist … tries to uncouple appearance from the observer. The final result is: both dissipate" (ibid., pp. 64–65, my translation).

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[57] For a comprehensive review of such an attitude in French theoretical circles, see Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes*.

The task then is: "To come in the middle between Impressionism and Expressionism, to complete seeing, that violates neither the man nor nature, but gives both of them their due…" (ibid., pp. 67–68, my translation). This is because, Expressionism being attached to its own ideology, also deals in impurities which allow it to go only so far on the way towards the release of the subject from its mandate, from the role that is artificially imposed on it – that of mediating between thought and experience. Instead Bahr, and through him Viennese modernism, calls for a new hybrid condition of sensuality, which depends not so much on re-accentuation of the senses, but (as was already pointed out) their extension through re-inscription onto a new space, a new surface and field of attachment. The hope is that they can be regenerated in such a displacement – a sort of conceptually inspired and aesthetically carried out cloning with qualitative modification, which undermines the biological and the physical integrity of the body, without losing the always necessary field of containment it provides. It is at this point, that Bahr starts discussing the idea of an inner, spiritual eye and the 'musical-eye' – the music of the eyes (*Augenmusik*).

The retuning of rationality which permeates the project of redesigning the human form into, up until then, an undiscovered plasticity is a *culture of design*. It explores and employs a plastic force, which must be tapped from the depths of a new perception apparatus, which does not simply skim the surface, as the eye would, but rather extracts the unknown element somewhere from below its skin, thus gaining access to a store of energy, akin to the Freudian unconscious:

> …this spiritual [mental] seeing, of which some people, and in the childhood almost all, are capable, is more than mere remembering or a mere reproduction of sensory seeing. It is its own production, since the spiritual seeing has a creative power, the power to create the world according to different laws than the laws of sensory seeing (ibid., p. 84, my translation).

It bears repeating that what is at stake here, is not a re-constitution of the subject, but in fact its location through a loss, especially the loss of its physicality, of its body as a symptom of its blindness. Only by starting away from man's general, biologically endowed constitution, of its disregard, can the new factuality and its phenomenology be brought into relief, in both senses of the word, as the accentuation of its topography and through it, a relief or a release from the imposed mapping of his psychology through the limiting mechanics of the sensory organs. Such starting place of being where 'he is not', is a corollary to Freud's famous *'Wo es war, soll Ich werden'*, 'where it was, I shall come into being'. It is thus the case for the Viennese modernism as it is for Freud and as we shall see for Schoenberg, that the symptom of the body (in various forms) will have to be overcome, or at least relegated to a lesser, intermediary stage, in the play of, the play for the rediscovery of what Ernst Mach refers to as the *unrettbares Ich*, the unsavable, non-salvageable I.[58]

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[58] Ernest Mach, playing the typical polymath role of the 19th century intellectual/scientist (his activity falls under the fields of philosophy, psychology and physics), writes about the concept of the 'I', already in 1885, in his *Antimetaphysische Vorbemerkungen* ('Antimetaphysical Observations'). In it, he advances the materialist view, that the unity of the 'I' and its objective consistency, is only a practical matter of convenient description. If things are considered carefully, we will realize that the 'I' is comprised from various, particular and disjoined elements (just like the physical body) which give it a fragmented nature,

Bahr's project falls into a long line of philosophical descent, which tries to reconcile abstract thought with worldly experience. Relaying on the authority of Goethe, Bahr concludes that the identity of the problem, its face after *all* the masks had been removed, is a split, a cleft or a hiatus that arises out of the disjuncture between subject and object. And whereas previous systems of thought attempted to bridge this gap by manipulating, extending and, in the end, disproportionately exaggerating the objective/physical or the spiritual component, the solution now needs to find a way to *inhabit* this split, this distance between the inner and the outer. Such a solution, as we will continually see, creates some very interesting consequences, which, in general, draw the confines of what we like to call modernity – its condition and conditioning. The nexus of this chain of consequences expresses itself in a technique of aestheticism which is not simply an affective projection of feelings and moods, of the inner self in its psychology (the standard description of Expressionism), but rather becomes a certain *methodology* of the self – a new twist in the long history of its progression.

The aesthetic identity thus derived could perhaps be best described as *synesthesia*, confusion, blending and scrambling of senses in the production of display, which is akin to Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* – the total work of art. The art of such display operates on the basis of collection, or more accurately gleaning, in the old sense of the word, i.e., going out into the fields after harvest, to pick, glean, whatever is left over. Because now, the only refuge that can be found, the only space available is the field of uncultivated leftovers of drives, impulses, instincts and forces, which to the ego appear

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from the start; a condition of the 'I-Complex' from which there is no remedy: "The 'I' is not an unchanging, certain and sharply delineated unity (p. 141, my translation). It consists of partial elements, just like all reality is constructed from tones, colours, various elementary quantities. That is why "the 'I' has a low consistency, just like the body" (p. 138) and why it cannot be saved ('*Das Ich ist unrettbar*'). See the shortened version of the aforementioned essay in *Die Wiener Moderne*, pp. 137–145.

as fallow land, spread out in the namelessness of its depravation. But one still needs a method of approach, a channel of accessibility and communication with that space of deformation, which ironically involves yet another investment, yet another re-drawing of the border, a new line in the sand. That line erases the old confines of the body as opposed to solidifying it for the collective purpose of a political ideology.

Erasure then, whose trace is especially stark in the paintings of Egon Schiele (Figures 3&4, Appendix) where the body is treated, or submitted to a type of botulism, or even leprosy, where muscular paralysis sets in, and where the bodily confines are continually fatigued, to the point that its totality, somewhat innocuously, like chalk-lines on the blackboard, is finally jettisoned. Here is a method charged with its particular bland of mysticism because it looks towards the beyond, if only in its longing looks towards the Orient as general inspiration, a common characteristic of Viennese modernism. But it is an 'unburdened' mysticism, which does not deem it necessary or proper to cover itself with stagnant materiality (as is the case with religious mysticism, for instance) as an excuse for the indiscretions of its always innate aggression; aggression because it wants, needs to be somewhere else and apart from the here and now. But let us not be mistaken: of course the subject still experiences his skin and bones. The difference now is how much importance, how much weight they have for him. The answer: only as much as the amount of resistance, the frequency, shape and density of obstacles encountered along the way, will allow him to feel – otherwise, everything else should be experienced in the perpetually intoxicating state of weightlessness – an alias for this 'uncivilizing force' to which the entire setting makes a reference, an acronym for the Freudian unconscious which will perpetually be in need of being deciphered through listening, a pseudonym for atonality as well as expressionism, for which one will need new ears, as Schoenberg says. These 'new ears' are of the order of what today we would call a genetically engineered appendage to the body, which is more than just a technological solution of a prosthesis – because these are the eyes that can also listen.

Bahr's final encounter, therefore, with the meaning of his time, the time he is inextricably caught up in, manifests itself through an interesting play with body parts:

> As soon as the waves of our inner life hit up to the eyes, we see our inner life, like we hear it, when its waves hit the ear. What, then, does all [effect] of music touch upon? To the tone-artist, the tones do not come from outside. He does not hear the world, he hears himself, the resounding of his soul in him... [And] what the painters of the newest movement want is, so to say, eye-music [*Augenmusik*] (*Expressionismus*, p. 104, my translation).

A play, a musical comportment and composition, which steps into its own by inserting the eye into the ear because "man wants to find himself once again" (ibid., p. 110). This manoeuvre is also supposed to expose technology, strip it naked by removing its imposing gravity, negotiating its technique away from the body, making the latter itself a method of approach: "This is what it is all about. Everything that we experience is simply this immense struggle for man, a struggle of soul with machine. We do not live any more, we are only lived" (ibid., p. 110). What the 'man' is lived by, is precisely the technique of the bourgeois world and its habitat, its *gestus*:

> Never has a time expressed itself more richly and strongly as the bourgeois rule in Impressionism. The bourgeois rule was unable to bring forth music or poetry, all music and poetry of its time is always either an [emulation] of the past or an anticipation of the future... Impressionism, is man's defection from spirit. The Impressionist is the abased man who thus degraded, becomes a gramophone of the outside world...the man of the bourgeois world does not carry through his life, he stops in the middle of seeing, for the man of the bourgeois world stops in the middle of life, just there, where the interest of man in life begins (ibid., p. 112, my translation).

And this is why:

> Instead of the eyes, the impressionists have still a pair of ears, but no mouth. For the man of the bourgeois time is nothing as the ear, he listens to the world, but he does not breath

> it he has no mouth, he is unable himself to speak about the world, to pronounce the law of the spirit. But the expressionist tears the mouth of humanity open again (ibid., p. 113, my translation).

The mouth is pried open via the eyes that listen (Figure 5, Appendix) – a strange decent, a grotesque heritage of forced, accosted, compelled and accelerated evolution. The play of the organs: The mouth that is open, via the eyes that listen, hence also a production of sound, a scream: "…man cries after his soul, the entire time becomes one and only cry in need [emergency, *Notschrei*]" (ibid., p. 111).

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The entire *Jahrhundertwende* epoch is characterized by such cry. There are many specific references to it, not only in Vienna, but all over Europe. The Futurists for instance cry and shout to the point of exhaustion. And perhaps the most famous representation of its necessity is Munch's *The Cry*, although his comes somewhat earlier, in 1883, anticipating all the ones that are to follow. And surely, we can see and accept that a similar event takes place in psychoanalysis, because there is not only something that cries out from the depths of the psyche, but it also makes itself heard through the voice, its clamour, desperation, indiscretion – speech that yields under the compulsion to yell. Of course, there is also Schoenberg, whose compositions employ the voice more than any other instrument – a voice that in its *Sprechstimme* style, often goes off the scale, not only in its pitch and volume, but also in its coherence. It is a voice that tears itself apart, as it escapes the body, and then shatters its own crystallization as it comes into contact with the mass of air, as the latter all of a sudden and unexpectedly presents a serious obstacle to its own identity. A disembodied voice, which means to announce the time, or maybe only a moment of ecstasy (literally, being out of the body). Perhaps what we are witnessing here, is a reversal of what Deleuze calls 'the body-without-organs'[59] and that would mean: we are in an uncomfortable presence of 'organs-without-a body'. We can look to Schiele's painting again for an image: the twisted limbs, discoloured, as if singed skin, exaggerated, contorted hands, definitely a new kind of anatomy, which almost makes the body translucent in its opacity. It is a new perspective (in the sense of 'seeing through' and 'seeing clearly' form Latin *perspicere*) which visualizes sound and renders vision sonorous, because it almost seems that we are not only seeing here the internal human anatomy inside out – a transgression in the functionality of its biology, but we hear it at work, like in the anechoic chamber, which a few decades later, will actually be used by John Cage, to further push the limits of what should be considered as sonorous.

All this coalesces into a new surface of engagement with reality, which dispenses with proportionality, homogeneity and continuity (found in linear perspective) and implodes into a new symbolic form, which makes the space conform to the dimension of the body, and not the other way around, where space is there as such *a priori* and the body must be always integrated into it in a dimension-conscious way. Given that it assumes a defining function, that it is a nexus of intensities, dynamics and inflections in service of a physiognomic message other than its own physicality, the body also creates a condition of instability, error and accident. This is the only way that art brings life into itself and is able to "produce life out of itself" (Bahr, *Expressionismus*, p. 114); the only way that marks the intersection between art and body, mixing them together into one plastic mass, for better or worse.

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[59] See Gilles Deleuze, *The Thousand Plateaus*.

7. *Play of Surfaces*

The 1927 study *Perspective as Symbolic Form* by Erwin Panofsky, apart from its purely academic message, in itself constitutes an early response to fin de siècle modernism. It follows closely on the footsteps of Vienna's pre-eminent art historian Alois Riegl who influences an entire generation of cultural theorists.[60] From our own position, especially interesting is the juxtaposition of divergent elements, the way these attempt to totalize the present from the moment of reflection into the past. The discussion over the next few pages, will engage both voices in their originality and response, intermittently.

Riegl is the greatest Austrian art historian of the decades around the turn-of-the-century. His claim to fame is the reformulation of the up until then dominant paradigm of art history, the one proposed and practiced by Gottfried Semper; a historical view whose method concentrates solely on the technical aspects of art, to the exclusion of its broader network of connections and significations. Riegl's argument expressed through the concept of 'the will of art' or 'art's will' (*Kunstwollen*), displaces the technical aspect of art production onto a secondary place, elevating the total, creative and cultural meaning of its manifestation to the forefront.

The discourse of *Kunstwollen* is lodged firmly in the distinction between technique and method. Riegl argues that technique and the technology of its construction, cannot serve as adequate basis to identify the characteristic profile of an art period; that the latter must be approached through a method that in some measure stands apart from the intricacies of technical praxis. This formula has a further consequence. On another level, it expresses the crucial difference between the subject and the self – the latter being a genuine artistic creation, when art, in its truth acquires individuality, and the self, in its authenticity becomes a piece of art.

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[60] Riegl's *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie* (1901), for instance, is a book to which Walter Benjamin ascribes the greatest influence on his thought. See Charles Rosen, "The Ruins of Walter Benjamin", in Gary Smith, ed., p. 134.

By all accounts, subjectivity as a point of view, a point of apprehension and representation, arises during the Renaissance with the technique of linear perspective and the set motion of its operation. We can find clues of such a meaning, in the word, and its more standard, political context of being subjected or the 'subject of', which from *subicere* to 'place under', combination of *sub*-'under' and *jacere*-'to throw', provokes all the connotations of being subjected, subjugated, being subjects in the political sense, but also being on display, being viewed and under investigation or surveillance. In this way one also becomes the subject-matter, a store or an archive of histories, experiences, knowledge, their orthodoxy and implicit corruption, which must be known, studied and uncovered. Perspective is space, or more accurately a 'slice' of space that one chooses to pay attention to. It engenders subjectivity not only because it imposes on us a certain notion of viewing, but in its servile attitude, since it presents a vista, an opening of space for apprehension, seemingly in its all revealing nakedness. In a very ambitious and sweeping way, Riegl proposes to his contemporaries, that history of visual arts can be divided into three general periods based on divergent ways of perspective or seeing. Such historical perspectivalism (on at least two levels, because all history is necessarily a perspective engendering exercise) is, interestingly, based on the mechanics of distance. In a series of lecture notes, published posthumously as the *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, this issue of historical perspective and its backward, contemplative gaze, is spread out along a three-pronged spectrum which identifies: (1) *the near view*, encompassing the voluminous heaviness, symmetry and tactility of Egypt; (2) *the normal view*, encompassing the subtle balance between naturalism and idealism found in ancient Greece; and (3) *the far/distant view*, which speaks to the early Renaissance modernity, and its focus on optics, proportionality, evenly distributed dimensions and clearly identified placement of vision in the point-of-view/vanishing-point dichotomy of bondage. If painterly perspective, preponderantly implicates the body in relation to what is known as the apex or the point-of-view, then Viennese modernism turns this formula right around, by redrawing the body itself into the vanishing-point, or the point that vanishes, as opposed to thinking of it calmly, as the static tip of visual orientation, that only looks longingly towards the horizon. To understand this, we have to consider Panofsky's response to Riegl's provocative historical optometry.

The basic principle of Panofsky's argument considers perspective as a special case of cognition – therein lies perspective's symbolism, and the power of its form. The special case in support of this cognitive field, is made through, not simply what happens *to* the subject, but in the fact *of* the subject. Perspective, by objectifying the idiomatic and unwieldy organization of space inherent to the untrained eye (the pre-perspectival vision), has the effect of recoiling, what Panofsky calls, the psycho-physiological dimension, in favour of the geometric/mathematical space. This kind of recoil, or passing off the responsibility for visual representation (and through it a specific world-view) to a deviant principle from the norm more or less found in the biological nature of human senses, is cast in terms of aesthetic space vs. theoretical space. The former uses visual symbolism of asymptotic spatial relations to signify perception, in opposition to the latter, which collects these same material-perceptions into the stabilizing but also enervating coordinates of logical representation.[61] It is like rolling-up a carpet under one's feet, while, at the same time standing on it and flattening the image, but in that, also making it consistently available for contemplation and viewing.

The event of the subject can only take place in this act that abrogates the independence and responsibility of objects in space (their individuality, so to say), subjugating them to a field of vision and observation, that will always arrange them in a certain proportion to one another, no matter what point of view will be taken. Whereas the ancient Greek, in his psycho-physiological 'perspective', *creates* space as the expression and a consequence of the bodily presence which must be accommodated, the geometrical perspective *immobilizes* it by giving space a priori qualities of homogeneity, seamlessness and smoothness, thus clothing the body irrevocably in its dimensions.

Panofsky's project, proposes to differentiate between the ancient and the Renaissance perspectives (an observation which already arises in Riegl), suggesting further that the Greek visual field, at least in part, was more intimately calibrated, because its perspective was based on the curved as opposed to linear spectrum, whose expanse one apprehended through vision at an angle (Euclid's VIIIth theorem) and not the immobile, monocular point of view. Such a loss of perception and vision, falls in line with Bahr's argument about the erosion in our ability to see. The consequence is the loss of self, although Panofsky is much more cautious and indecisive about this last point:

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[61] Describing ancient Greece, Panofsky concludes that: "The art of classical antiquity was a purely corporeal art; it recognized as artistic reality only what was tangible as well as visible. Its objects were material and three-dimensional, with clearly defined functions and proportions, and thus were always to a certain extent anthropomorphized. These objects were not merged in painterly fashion into spatial unity, but rather were affixed to each other in a kind of tectonic or plastic cluster … the represented space remains aggregate space; it never becomes that which modernity demands and realizes, a systematic space (*Perspective as Symbolic Form*, pp. 41–42). Panofsky goes on to relate a time-line which works consistently and doggedly towards the erosion of this type of aggregate space, with the result that, around the time of the Renaissance, the aggregate space becomes completely translated into systematic, mathematical space, based on the flattening of the three-dimensional, phenomonologically vital space of the ancients, into a two-dimensional surface of modernity; the individuality of bodies and objects *as* space is removed in favour of the predictability of their movements *in* space, even though the latter manifestation, is not without its own benefits.

> ...the perpectival view, whether it is evaluated and interpreted more in the sense of rationality and the objective, or more in the sense of contingency and the subjective, rests on the will to construct pictorial space, in principle, out of the elements of, and according to the plan of, empirical visual space (although still abstracted considerably from the psycho-physiological "givens"). Perspective mathematizes this visual space, and yet it is very much *visual* space that it mathematizes; it is an ordering, but an ordering of the visual phenomenon. Whether one reproaches perspective for evaporating "true being" into a mere manifestation of seen things, or rather for anchoring the free and, as it were, spiritual idea of form to a manifestation of mere seen things, is in the end little more than a question of emphasis (*Perspective as Symbolic Form*, pp. 71–72).

Whether or not one reproaches Panofsky for trivializing and underestimating the consequences of such 'matter of emphasis', one thing is indisputable: the bestowed responsibility for vision onto the subject in both objective and subjective moments, since it is exactly the subject who now must carry objectivity within his conceptual apparatus. In this sense, the world and its contingency, a contingency that the subject achieves in name only, since he has no choice but to carry the visual cone around as an indispensable technique of self, disappears (Figure 6, Appendix). And it is this sort of underestimation that the fin-de-siècle Viennese modernism, rebels against. The slogan of this rebellion, as was already intimated, is the freeing of 'man' from the shell of the subject. This manoeuvre, rests on the idea of art, which like Schoenberg's music *recoils* from harmony and its implication in homogeneity and proportion, for the benefit of *organicism*, not in the sense of a new biological principle, but in the guise of the *organum*, the 'play of organs' and their surfaces which are liberated from the constricting body, whether it is the physical body, or the body of knowledge as perspective, tradition and the technique that harmonization carries within itself.[62]

There is nothing more unpredictable than the disembodied 'organ', whose outlines, freed from the operational imperative of the mechanical system, and now imbued with the expectation for a new action (performance), connect through a network of an alternate, plastic and malleable aggregate space; a space which is produced in the moment of approach which purges normality of its coherence. In this sense, we could describe this creative tension, as a space of transference (*Übertragung*) – a space that drags and pulls, pushes over, shuffles, expels and cracks under the high voltage and resistance to the type of information that it tries to carry. Thus is created a permeable membrane which eventually takes over the physical aspect (including the physical body) hollowing it out as much as possible, so that it can stand not as an obstacle which needs to be continually readjusted or even dispensed with, but a new sort of materiality, a material that can be fine-tuned and sculpted to the desired callousness, that would be expressive (and not simply impressive) of its own desire. This is the way the body, the one of the psychoanalytic patient, or the body of art, is reintroduced into the most basic 'species' of communication, that of an envoy, where the message is literally carried through the presence of the messenger in his mere physical component. The effect is a collapse and overlapping of the two, the messenger and the message becoming a new form; a form that is not rational/symmetrical but whose strength and potential of mutual interpenetration lies in the *aesthetics of distortion* which constitutes the bowels of the fin de siècle's creative drive, carrying information, which in the end, proves to be much more valuable than the simple ornamental-design of its surface, whether it be the stylized one of *Jugendstil*, the symptomatic one of the psychoanalytic patient, or the consumptive/degenerate one, like Schiele's bodies. Rather, what distortion exposes is the *moment* of possibility in its condensation. Schoenberg's sound, his music is very much described through and identified with such moments – the momentary situation of tones, strung into a sequence, which in the end create their own monumentality, their own cohesion without harmony – or, to use the already proposed nomenclature, *organicism* without the body.

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[62] Reverting back to the field of music proper for a moment, we might want to find an interesting correspondence between the standard Western musical harmony, based on the tonal center, and painterly perspective. The former prescribes specific rules for how clear, organized and pristine sound is to be produced, by, precisely standardizing the kind of distances that are allowed between notes and how distortions are to be handled; a set of provisions not at all unlike the painterly perspective, which set specific, invariable increments of spatial distortions (of measured and repeated amounts by which objects diminish, for instance, as they go off into the distance), for the benefit of the overall visual coherence. In this sense, the classical harmony in music creates something akin to *visual music/sonority*, based on the idea of perspective as 'seeing through' and 'seeing clearly, by making sound linear and predictable, thus exposing the musical space/form in the logic of its construction. On the other hand, the fin de siècle reality, especially Schoenberg's music, seems to work on the opposite premise – it tries to represent vision musically (Kandinsky, of course is a prime example of this, as applied to painting), or said differently it attempts describe experience through the channel of *sonorous vision*.

The Renaissance perspective and the principle through which it 'behaves itself' always so predictably, the principle of *construzione legittima* ('legitimate', correct and always stable way of construction) is primarily in the business of curbing the contingency that goes hand in hand with distortion, of making it measurable and metric by controlling the degrees by which the size of objects diminishes, as one's vision goes off into the distance, that distance being marked by what is known as the vanishing-point:

> For the modern vanishing-point construction distorts all widths, depths and heights in constant proportion, and thus defines unequivocally the apparent size of any object, the size corresponding to its actual magnitude and its position with respect to the eye. That is precisely the enormous advantage of the modern method, precisely why it was so passionately pursued (*Perspective as Symbolic Form*, p. 40).

The vanishing-point and the concept of infinity confounded with it creates the center of a visual field, which paradoxically, is somehow always outside, always beyond the horizon, always moving away (vanishing), and yet defining, instituting and attracting. It is a center, which, in the end, is not a center, as Derrida rightly observes,[63] even though it creates the condition of centrality through channelled dispersion, as its own line of flight. Even more intriguing is that the vanishing-point corresponds to the point-of-view, at the apex of the visual pyramid. The two are at the same level, literally at the eye level, we can even say that they are looking each other in the eyes, that they see eye to eye. Of course, whether or not the vanishing-point through distance and its otherness, actually gazes back at the viewer, is much too complicated to explore here – much of our modern psychology, especially Lacanian psychoanalysis, has been preoccupied with precisely this issue (couched in terms of desire, the impossibility of its fulfillment, its reflection in a lack, etc.). But there is some sort of agreement – or at least some sort of conspiracy of mutual inscription.

This is why perspective, in its drive to make distortion predictable, solicits a response, in the form of the subject; a response without which it cannot make any head-way, in most literal terms, since its unfolding and extension, its unveiling, depends on the position which is occupied by the act of viewing, i.e., the subject and his head. This is the only way that it receives life. But since the eye of the viewer here is always suspended by wire, so to speak, by the many lines that bind it to a preordained harness of vectors as the field of vision which dispenses and deals in proportionality, the subject is necessarily and inescapably underpinned by what Maria Reichenbach calls the 'subjective metric'.[64] And yet, it responds and connects with, what in the last analysis, does not belong to such metric system, since it is snatched away by infinity, losing symmetry at the same time as it is in the process of gaining it. The subject thus becomes, in the assessment of Marleau-Ponty:

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[63] "...it has always been thought that the center, which is by definition unique, constituted that very thing within a structure which while governing the structure, escapes structurality. This is why classical thought concerning structure could say that the center is, paradoxically, *within* the structure and *outside it*. The center is at the center of the totality, and yet, since the center does not belong to the totality (is not part of the totality), the totality *has its center elsewhere*. The center is not the center. The concept of centered structure—although it represents coherence itself, the condition of the *episteme* as philosophy of science—is contradictorily coherent." (Derrida, "Force and Signification", in *Writing and Difference*, p. 279)

[64] In Hubert Damisch, *The Origin of Perspective*, p. 39.

> …a tacit, silent *Being-at* …. the *self* of perception as 'nobody', like Ulysses, and anonymous one drowning in the world but who has yet to make his way through it. Nobody as imperception, evidence of nonpossesion: it is precisely because one knows too well what one is dealing with that one has no need to posit it as ob-ject.[65]

The non-identity at work in the fin-de-siècle setting, the 'nobody', is even more radical, for it is *a no-body*.

In the long run, the symmetry and organization of space which linear perspective works so hard to impose and maintain, cannot withstand the mystery and mysticism of the vanishing-point, its infinity. It is this point which always throws the constructive functionality of perspective into a state of disrepair, finally making it collapse under the elegance of its own construct. Thus, the element which was meant to be only a part (albeit an extremely important one) of the whole; the element which was to be working in service of a greater good, that good being the maintenance of the field of vision, becomes itself a point of value, desire and contention. Again, we can speak of the moment of *recoil*, since what used to be the vanishing-point, becomes once again enclosed, ingested by the body, creating a vanishing dimension of depth, known as the unconscious. The principle of its operation moves along similar lines, but the consequences of that movement, are profoundly different. For what 'transpires' when the horizon of visibility is inscribed into the body, is nothing less than the event of vanishing of the body as such, exemplified by the re-calibration of its sensory input and output. By the same token, what happens in Freudian psychoanalysis, is simply giving voice to this inverted vanishing-point. In this manner we find ourselves once again at the strange threshold of the music of the eyes (*Augenmusik*) introduced during our discussion of Hermann Bahr; a strange contraption indeed, but an unavoidable one, because vision, in order to advance beyond its own limitations, must learn how not to see, so that it is able to perceive anything at all.

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[65] Mareau-Ponty, *Visible and the Invisible*, p. 201.

Perspective (the practical invention of its discourse as a historical variable, which takes place, by and large, in the context of the turn-of-the-century Vienna) initiates a line of questioning and a series of assessments that prove to be crucial in apprehending the positioning of the subject, in both senses of the word: the subject as the ego and the subject of modernity. What transpires here, is a certain play of space and surface, or we can say in one breath with Riegl, using his grammar to describe the history of visual arts, the play of the *organic* and the *harmonic*.

Riegl's *type-setting* of the past proposes to aim at the historical target, or even more profoundly to *invent* history, through 'grammatical conciseness':

> ...Man's artistic activity ... continually fluctuates between two poles: the *harmonic*, which strives to bring the immutable formal law of crystallinity to view in all motifs, including organic ones; and the *organic*, whose supreme goal is to represent organic motifs in all their accidental and transitory momentary appearances... [thus] ...we arrive at the following observations.
>
> *a.* Any worldview that values natural things only in physically improved form will generally be predisposed toward the harmonic, for physical beauty is equal to harmony, that is, symmetry and proportion. Conversely, a worldview that strives exclusively for the spiritual improvement of nature without regard for its physical *habitus* – or that simply tolerates the transitory appearances of nature as such – will be intrinsically inclined toward the organic.
>
> *b.* In periods when utilitarian purpose constitutes a work of art's sole reason for being, people always prefer to make motifs as harmonic as possible, or, as we shall call it here, to *harmonize* them (*harmonisieren*); conversely, during times when art is an end in itself, people tend to make them organic, or to *Organize* them (*organisieren*)... As for particular purposes, the harmonic generally corresponds better to the decorative and practical functions, while the conceptual purpose naturally tends to require organic solutions (*Grammar*, pp. 137–138).

Taking a moment to reflect, the immensity of the project which leads to sweeping and boldly-stroked framing of history that presents it almost ready-made for consumption and further manipulation (by the way, this seems to also be the type of engagement Freud practices; we need only think here of Oedipus) should be readily apparent. The turn of the century modernism is taken by this sort of view into the distance (again, a version of the conceptual re-inscription of the vanishing-point) which, ironically, is meant to bring things closer, while assigning them to the somewhat nebulous realm of memory. In the case of Riegl this sort of manipulation, takes on shape in two verbs – *'organisieren'* and *'harmonisieren'*. Spun out of this coupling of *organization and harmonization*, what the praxis of organizing and harmonizing underscores, especially when the issue of memory is considered, is the pressure point of the type of argument that will be made about Freud and Schoenberg – an engagement which I am continually trying to set-up and bring into relief, via the context in which both psychoanalysis and the 12-tone music find themselves suspended.

The words of course present themselves almost immediately as translation difficulties. The distinction between 'organization' and 'harmonization' drawn by Riegl, loses its distinctness, since in English, harmonization, could simply be interpreted as a specific type of organization, and vice versa. Yet, the problem is that Riegl works with a line of demarcation between the *organic* and the *inorganic* and their perpetual expressive inter-changeability, the cycles of their mutual engenderment and curbing throughout the history of visual arts, finally concluding that: "…our examination of the course of art history yields a picture of a fiercely progressive Organism continually reined in and steered along by harmonism" (ibid., p. 139). The somewhat cumbersome translation of the German noun *der Organismus* with the English 'Organism', which, as Jacqueline E. Jung in her "Translator's Preface" to Riegl's manuscript points out, would probably be better rendered as 'organicism', is the key term in understanding not only Riegl's thinking, but much of what comes after it, in the form of Viennese modernism.

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It is precisely here, that we encounter this very special blend of motives, which aspire to a certain type of 'organics', and through it a certain type of organization, but one which does not harmonize and make symmetric, as well as one, which does not necessarily imply the biological organism, even though, its aesthetics is premised on the 'organic quality' of permeability and fudged contours between inside and outside, near and far, statement and non-statement, language and namelessness, sound and silence. This series of dichotomies present themselves as operational modules of the type of general expression of perception and its exasperation so characteristic at the turn of the last century. Interestingly, what we see in it, is the type of body that Descartes tries to eliminate from any sort of logical apprehension as knowledge – the body that does not see clearly and errs. The twist, or the unanticipated outcome is that the act of welcoming and embracing, the action of extended hospitality to this body, arrives at a much more effective state of its elimination – certainly a state far beyond Descartes' wildest imagination, moving along the spectrum introduced by Nietzsche of man being a cross between a plant and a ghost; tipping the balance and moving closer and closer towards the former – the biology of a plant.

Oscar Kokoschka[66] in a gesture similar to that of Schiele, explores and liberates the material logic of body's own physicality and the mystery of its opacity (Figures 7&8, Appendix). Such mystery is enclosed in the 'organic' memory, to use Riegl's vocabulary, which gives us the stored psychology of not only the human psyche, but also of space in general. Taken to its bare minimum, the logic enclosed within the shell of the physical body, is nothing else, by default, than the *logic of decay*. There is no better expression of such logic of decay than sound, especially the sound in the shape of Schoenberg's music. This is also why, the entire fin de siècle reality, from its shouts for the primitive, in the form of rediscovery of the *Ur-schrei* (primordial call), through the flowing lines of the *Jugendstil*, or even the bent-wood furniture of the Thonet brothers, to the primary system of drives in psychoanalysis and the sounding of the unconscious, becomes, in a large measure *musical* – the carrier of a misrecognized principle, theory and method of sound – the principle of its manifestation through distortion and dispersal.

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[66] Kokoschka counts among Schoenberg's friends from the world of art. See Stuckenschmidt, p. 93.

8. *Vociferous Perspective*

Fin de siècle modernity gorges itself on perspective.[67] It is a discourse which not simply abounds in popularity or cloaks itself as something fashionable (although, no doubt, it is also both of these things) but more significantly it is something that rages along with the frantic activity of the de-ranged senses. In short, what is at stake here is a certain world-view (*Weltanschauung*).

Alois Riegl advances the cause of two such principal world-views vying for position throughout history in the shape of two perspectives with varying, context specific intensities and proportions: (1) the inorganic/harmonizing complex, which subdues the accidental play of shapes and forces to the benefit of visual symmetry (Riegl's archetype being the structural quality of the crystal); and (2) the organic/organizing complex as the release of all the nature's accidental qualities enclosed in the shape of any bio-mass to the benefit of that mass' objective independence from the space which surrounds it (which Riegl and after him Panofsky, for the most part, find in ancient spatial arrangements). Given this, we may by all means ask – where along this spectrum is the *Jahrhundertwende* modernity to be placed?

Of course, this question already presents us with the conundrum of false parameters, because the conceptual endowment at the turn-of-the-century is not interested in *placement* at a certain point on that imaginary spectrum, but rather movement along its constantly imploding lines. That is why, we should be 'mapping' reality in a different scale, precisely the scale of a world-view, which means to open up experience to the memory of a space which moves 'man' closer and closer to Nietzsche's plant, its plastic capacity for accelerated and spectacular growth, ensconced by the potential for the catastrophic – the rapid wilting and decay.

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[67] What is meant here, is not only the 'discovery' of linear perspective as a historical event, whose intellectual lineage is somewhat murky, although we can be certain that in general, it falls together with the chronology of 'art history' as a scientific field, whose modern institution goes back to Riegl (the latter attributes the discovery of the idea of 'painterly character' to Wickhoff, and the institution of art history to the previous 150 years or so, even though based on a different premise of aesthetics). Rather, perspective, the way it becomes manipulated, described and utilized at the turn of the century, serves as an indicator of a general way of seeing. The felt necessity of its invention, is due to the profound (even though never fully identified) existential crisis, that grips the fin de siècle culture. The issue then becomes the question of placement and locality; of enclosure, stability, safety and ability to see. For a recent explication of this entire perspectival problematic, including the question of the painterly perspective and its supposed history, see Hubert Damisch, *The Origin of Perspective*.

This is why, the issue of the ornament, all of a sudden, becomes such a hot, and highly contested topic. In fact, in an earlier manuscript *The Problems of Style*, Riegl explores a comprehensive history of the ornament, a formulation whose introduction was far from a run of the mill, clearly accepted or anticipated field of engagement, as is unequivocally expressed by Riegl in the opening words to the Introduction: "The subtitle of this book announces its theme: 'Foundations for a History of Ornament'. How many of you are now shrugging your shoulders in disbelief merely in response to the title? What, you ask, does ornament also have a history?" (*The Problems of Style*, p. 3). Apparently so, at least in Riegl's estimation, and what is especially important for our purposes, is not so much the content or a progression of such an history (which can always be disputed) but the event of its contrivance in the first place. Such contrivance should not be underestimated in its novelty, for through it, the psychological re-definition of space takes hold.

At issue is precisely what we have been trying to emphasize all along – new aesthetics not as the pre-given idealism of beauty, but a praxis of perception. This point is made explicitly by Riegl in the second version (1899) of his lecture notes, that have been passed along to us under the title of *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*: "Whereas the old aesthetics wanted to give instruction to the discipline of art history, her heiress – modern aesthetics, if you will – eagerly lets art history teach her. She recognizes that her very right to exist lies rooted in the history of art" (*Grammar*, p. 288). The invention of such a circumscribed realm of the past as history, creates a new intersection in the general, intellectual *Gestalt* and its attitude. It marks the invention of language and especially its grammar as so many 'scientific' enclosures to be investigated, and then applied as tools, which can be used in conjunction with other inquiries (hence the importance of 'grammar' in Riegl's title). Not to forget that it also becomes the index of 'man' in his make-up, as a special brand of phenomenological reality. Once again, Riegl is unequivocal in his assessment:

> …the clear recognition of the essence of the visual arts, can only become accessible through the developmental history of art's basic elements, dictated by the highest guiding factor of all artistic production.
>
> Perhaps I can illuminate this better by referring to the close parallels between the visual arts and language. Language likewise has its proper elements, and we call the developmental history thereof the historical grammar of the language in question. Someone who merely wants to speak the language has no use for this grammar, nor does anyone who wants simply to understand it. But whoever wants to know why the language proceeded along this path and no other, whoever wants to grasp the position of the language within human culture in general – whoever, in a word, wants to comprehend the given language scientifically – cannot do without the historical grammar (ibid., p. 292).

This twist in thinking which elevates the linguistic element and through it, history, to the apex of a new intellectual approach to reality (described by Foucault in connection to that time-line)[68] swells the foundations of existence to the heights of new responsibility, because now it is human agency and its historical progression framed in the ideology of subsequent world-views, that bears the burden of definitions. History ceases to be merely the past, and becomes a tactic, a strategy in the shape of memory, or even more specifically, *correct* memory, which is always in need of adjustment, in order that it may reach the status of legitimacy – a formula, which will be incessantly and almost exclusively applied by Freud, as the center piece of his psychoanalytic design.

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[68] Here, I will of course refer the reader to Foucault's *The Order of Things*, especially Chapter 10, where the issues of language as perception not explanation, history as a new horizon of a limit, and the general grounding of 'man' as a point of orientation towards reality, are brilliantly exposed, albeit from a different and more elaborate sequence of theoretical engagements than in the present narrative.

In this manner, both history and man, receive a *voice*, becoming the sound-expressions of each other, in a rhythmically-structured dialectics of form, surface and their echo: "Form and surface always sustain a certain relationship; and although it is true that surface can sometimes outweigh form, there is no such thing as a non-corporeal work of art, or pure surface" (ibid., p. 294). Through these two components, Riegl sets up a phenomenology and an anthropology of art, whose premise is that of a constant struggle – a contest (*Wettschaffen*) which is perpetuated in the service of an anthropomorphic coagulation of forces, as the compromise and stability of a particular *Weltanschauung*:

> …the creation of art can never be – and does not seek to be – a direct imitation of nature but rather is a contest with nature; that is, it aims for a certain idea or conception of nature. In art, man re-creates nature as he would like it to be and as it indeed exists in his mind… This impulse, which is in fact identical with the drive to create art, derives from man's striving for happiness. All human culture can ultimately be explained in terms of this striving… Consequently, man creates a vision of nature in his art that frees him from nature's instability; he imagines nature to be better than it looks… The comforting view of nature is something man creates in his mind. It affects man's relation to every object in the world without exception. Thus it entails not only the relations of man to extra-human nature, which we call an understanding of nature in the narrow sense, but also the relation of one person to another, which we call the understanding of morality. We can pull all this together under the single term "worldview" (ibid., p. 300).

The cohesion thus gained, creates a formula, which further specified, will lead to the already brought up dichotomy of organization vs. harmonization. But more importantly, its increasingly charged contents, will finally reach the self, and be inscribed onto the surface of individual psychology, as a form of a specific type of 'man'. A 'man' who struggles to remember and is always caught in the network of deceptive memory. A 'man' who yearns for a reconciliation between the civilizing forces, and the rawness of his own nature, which always somehow drives him beyond the cultural legitimacy of his own construction. The latter creates the necessity of measurement and comparison of distances, not only in terms of history but also and especially in terms of the social, political and physical dimension of the body. And psychology is only created after the fact, *ex post facto*, or beyond the horizon of the event which brings the surfaces of the two (history and body) together into the friction of a new form.

This spectrometric approach to art and civilization, the attempt to measure and calibrate its dimensions, will show itself in the re-elaboration of the surface, through *Jugendstil*, for instance, and its floral/ornamental arrangements as an indication of new spatial appropriation. It will also mark the grotesqueness of symptoms found on the surface of the body of the new social type – the fin de siècle neurotic individual. Just as both of these are meant to be genuine expressions of the new 'harmonizing' world-view, it will also be the case, that the direct reactions against such ornamentality, in the guise of Loos' 'ornament and crime' adage, or Freudian psychoanalysis, that is, reactions of depth and its 'organics' against the surface, will measure themselves according to the standard of a genuine expression of the new, dynamic, generative method of understanding and living. This is where the perspective as bio-mass (whether it is the human body, or physical materiality in general) retreats from the confines of an integral plane, which preserves in the name of an ethical principle of self-maintenance at all costs, and acquires the general identity of a raw-material, which must be treated in the service of interminable, unending interpretation.

9. *Implantation of the Body – the Ego and its Foreign Element*

The notion of 'implantation' organizes what we have encountered up to this point, along two main streams: (1) the *'agricultural'* plane of meaning deposited in the psychophysics of the body and its space, which, through this historical edge of being at the turn gains an elaborate system of roots which nonetheless are also continuously transplanted; (2) of being implanted with a seed of dissention, decadence, discomfort, and thus manipulated partly deliberately, and partly by forces beyond one's control, thus accelerated and organically modified, in order to be harvested as a new species of perceptual arrangement. All this, of course, is an outgrowth and a consequence of the new refractive immediacy in which the fin de siècle individual finds himself; the immediacy of the limit, and at the limit, because it opens up as it closes off in its re-orienting function of a *Weltanschauung*, the world-view.

In fact, this issue is considered directly by Freud in one of his Introductory Lectures to Psychoanalysis (Lecture XXXV, *The Question of a Weltanschauung*). The definition of its concept is an all-encompassing one, as a general philosophical and practical ideology, that expresses and consummates the spirit of the times:

> …*Weltanschauung* is an intellectual construction which solves all the problems of our existence uniformly on the basis of one overriding hypothesis, which, accordingly, leaves no question unanswered and in which everything that interests us finds its fixed place. It will easily be understood that the possession of a *Weltanschauung* of this kind is among the ideal wishes of human beings. (SE 22: 158).

After proposing to formulate the issue in such a broad manner, Freud immediately turns to the question of psychoanalysis and concludes that: "…the answer as regards psycho-analysis is made easy" (SE 22: 158). The easiness of such an answer, which denies psychoanalysis the ability to perpetuate and to posses its own 'omnipotent' world-view, it seems, comes almost too laconically and dismissively to Freud:

> As a specialist science, a branch of psychology – a depth-psychology or psychology of the unconscious – it is quite unfit to construct a *Weltanschauung* of its own: it must accept the scientific one. But the *Weltanschauung* of science already departs noticeably from our definition (SE 22: 158).

This departure centers round the issue of ideal wishes – an important component of the original formulation, as we have seen. Science, according to Freud, is not simply responding to reality but is an active agent in its construction. Besides the fact that its premise operates in the 'ledger' of truth, it is also able to be realistic about its own power and acknowledge the accounting deficit of its constructs, by being accountable, admitting to its limitations, disappointments, deceptions and errors.

One of the central themes of Freud's text on *Weltanschauung* is science and the legitimacy of its 'viewing' environment, which is distinguished from other possible systems of perception, of which the most challenging, serious and potentially damaging is religion. Interesting is Freud's dismissal of art as a viable option. According to this argument, art does not have the power to inflict indelible and grave enough cultural consequences, for it to be considered in the same light as religion or even philosophy, that is, as a system of apprehension and apperception which has the ability to impose its own mode of viewing on reality in general:

> Of the three powers [religion, philosophy and art] which may dispute the basic position of science, religion alone is to be taken seriously as an enemy. Art is almost always harmless and beneficent; it does not seek to be anything but an illusion. Except for a few people who are spoken of as being 'possessed' by art, it makes no attempt at invading the realm of reality (SE 22: 160).

It is indeed a long standing and curious question, as to why Freud always and quite forcefully insists on pulling psychoanalysis by its hair, so to speak, into the direction of a scientific paradigm, especially since, as he admits, psychoanalysis lacks one of it essential components – that of cause-effect experimental setup, an omission that does not go unnoticed, if we remind ourselves of Wittgenstein's comments, for instance. The issue is more than just one of legitimization and respect, since the latter would be better addressed by insisting (and this, in the end, happens anyway) on psychoanalysis' own uniqueness, on its special kind of epistemological underpinnings, which gives it precisely what Freud wants to deny it – the construction, possession and a perpetuation of its own *Weltanschauung*.

Dealing with such diminished cadence of importance, or said differently, dealing with psychoanalysis through the mitigating circumstances of science, thus removing much of the methodological responsibility from its own hands is rather to be found in a slightly different circumstance. The motivation for this type of occurrence is a systemic issue, which stems from the mechanics of Freud's fully mature theory. It is an issue of system-wide consistency, since science, given the fact that it is exclusively concerned with reality, or even more radically, that it presents and proposes a process of morphing with it, is a parallel concept to, perhaps even the most powerful and far-reaching cultural expression of the ego.

Religion and philosophy corrupt reality by investing it with the idealism and the desire of 'wishful thinking'. These ideal wishes render that, which they claim as reality, unliveable because of the de-realizing effect which brings about the pathological state of detachment, instead of manageable reality. Through their removal from the realm of immediate concern, philosophy and religion institute perception that rests on revelation, intuition and divination, as Freud points out. This is also how the total *Weltanschauung* can be perpetuated and accomplished – the kind of grand and illusory world-building that is precisely characteristic of individual pathology, whose central feature is nothing else than an almost absolute detachment from and irresponsibility towards the world. On the scale of civilizations, such cultural psychosis makes itself known through an unquestionable, all-knowing and transparent world-view which has the uncanny ability to answer all questions and to permeate down to the last fibre of experience, giving it the certainty and purpose of existence. In contrast to such a description, science is much more uncertain, timid, conflicted and confused about its own stance:

> It is true that it [science] too assumes the *uniformity* of the explanation of the universe; but it does so only as a programme, the fulfillment of which is relegated to the future. Apart from this it is marked by negative characteristics, by its limitation to what is at the moment knowable and by its sharp rejection of certain elements that are alien to it (SE 22: 159).

In other words, science already operates in the 'groove' of a basic repression, which situates it firmly in the space of the reality principle and its 'truth'. Any idealism of unfulfilled wishes is integrated chronometrically, through the distance of time, into the overall set-up as something to be addressed in the future, i.e., displaced onto the concept of desire. In this Freud mimics and mirrors his systematic elaboration of ego-psychology (which becomes a synonym for psychoanalysis in Freud's mature theory).

If we now consider Freud's Lecture XXXI, *Dissection of the Personality* (1933), which builds on one of the most important texts in his theoretical oeuvre, *The Ego and the Id*, things get interesting indeed. The ego is this realm in the generality of the psychic apparatus in charge of the maintenance, perpetuation and resolution of a *Weltanschauung*. Through it, the ego is supposed to mitigate, judge and discern among impulses coming from three, equally powerful directions: the external reality, the super-ego, and the unconscious id:

> We are warned by a proverb against serving two masters at the same time. The poor ego has things even worse: it serves three masters and does what it can to bring their claims and demands into *harmony* with one another. These claims are always divergent and often seem incompatible. No wonder that the ego so often fails in its task. Its three tyrannical masters are the external word, the super-ego and the id. When we follow the ego's efforts to satisfy them simultaneously – or rather, to obey them simultaneously – we cannot feel any regret at having personified this ego and having set it up as a *separate organism* (SE 22: 77, my emphasis).

The near impossibility of this task of reconciliation among three contradictory and divergent forces, manifests itself in the form of the perpetual, background noise of anxiety, which when elevated to a high enough threshold, 'blossoms' into a pathological condition. Nonetheless, the ego or the 'I' (*das Ich*) is continually engaged in its task of taking care of knowledge and perception, deciding and very often coming down on the side of error, as to how such knowing should be accomplished and what conclusions drawn from it. As such, it is very much operating negatively, through uncertainty and the acknowledgement of its very obvious short-comings, at the same time feeling the pressure of constantly trying to overcome them. Being under this sort of spell, the spell of reality (and operating under the restrictive guidance of its principle) the ego occupies the unique position in 'charge' of external world through perception. But, due to this fact, it is also extremely limited in the adjustments possibilities, because the world presents to the ego a basic and undeniable truth as physical, objective existence which threatens the uncompromising internal forces with its materiality; an innate compulsion to which the ego is also accountable. The solution is the elevation of the ego, if not to the position of a world-view, then at least to the level of *uniformity* in the explanation of reality. And all this, Freud sees in science as well, or rather, as we will see later, in its *artful* application.

Structurally, this line of reasoning is integrated into the system of Freud's depth-psychology. By making the ego independent of the three masters it serves, one is able to reformulate it into a *separate organism*. The solution might seem to be cosmetic, but Freud and psychoanalysis need it. Instead of being squeezed in between the impinging forces of the unconscious and the superego (and assaulted from the side, by external reality) the ego is now given its own dimension of space, that simply subsumes all the other components within its own confines. This is how Freud's psychology becomes the ego-psychology *par excellence*, and how the standard descriptors given to its elements acquire the character of overflowing and constantly divided notions.

The ego, then, must fall into the state of removal from all the surfaces that press on it incessantly, setting in place the constant and never removed danger of a cave-in, an implosion:

> In its attempts to mediate between the id and reality, it [the ego] is often obliged to cloak the *Ucs.* commands of the id with its own *Pcs.* rationalizations, to conceal the id's conflicts with reality, to profess, with diplomatic disingenuousness, to be taking notice of reality even when the id has remained rigid and unyielding. On the other hand it is observed at every step it takes by the strict super-ego, which lays down definite standards for its conduct, without taking any account of its difficulties from the direction of the id and the external world, and which, if those standards are not obeyed, punishes it with tense feelings of inferiority and of guilt. Thus the ego, driven by id, confined by the super-ego, repulsed by reality, struggles to master its economic task of bringing about *harmony* among the forces and influences working in and upon it... (SE 22: 78, my emphasis).

The question of harmony, or at least the necessity for its derivation, is an interesting one, not only in connection to the Freudian paradigm, but also in the context of our continuing discussion. If the impact of the situation is fully considered, when the condition of the ego's impossible stance, of being invaded by foreign and hostile elements is brought to light in its full extent, then the unavoidable conclusion is contradiction. Harmony is precisely that, which Freud identifies in ideal wishful thinking, a delusion of which he accuses both religion and philosophy, whose artificial maintenance leads to a pathological condition. But if harmony is necessary, then not even the scientific paradigm in its humbleness, as Freud sees it, is enough for the ego. This is why, he refers to the ego as an *organism*, a hybrid form, which actively translates, re-works and re-assembles all the impulses that it harvests, whether purposefully or not. By this motion, the ego becomes a place and a space, or once again, as Freud says, a *separate organism* and not simply a descriptive mental attitude, where contradictions and tensions can and must exist side by side, where not unlike Schoenberg's musical procedure, dissonance is liberated, acknowledged and considered to be the primary building material, or at least a skeleton which holds the structure together, supporting a façade which often, in its benign, ornamental nature, is deceptively conciliatory and innocent. All these divergent paths cutting through the 'organism' of the ego and the methodological procedures of healing the psychic forms which can always be shattered, like a crystal (Freud, SE 22: 59) (an obvious connection to Riegl's crystallinity emerges here); the ego's relation to both the internal and external forces as foreign territories (SE 22: 57) and thus its implantation with a seed of dissention, with an alien element which does not belong; all this forces Freud to propose an analogy, a metaphor that would in some measure capture the 'truth' of the ego's operative principle, or simply, its existence:

> In thinking of this division of the personality into an ego [das Ich], a super-ego [das Über-Ich] and an id [das Es], you will not, of course, have pictured sharp frontiers like the artificial ones drawn in political geography. We cannot do justice to the characteristics of the mind by linear outlines like those in a drawing or in primitive painting, *but rather by areas of colour melting into one another as they are presented by modern artists* (SE 22: 79, my emphasis).

This is indeed a curious, if not an unexpected expression, given what Freud had previously said about art as a cultural force, dismissing it almost out of hand. Freud's writings, in fact, are full of such contradictory attitudes towards art, which sometimes is accorded an important illustrative, if not a systemic/structural place, whose confines psychoanalysis, even in its evasiveness, naturally gravitates towards, only at other times, to be dispensed with quickly and unceremoniously. Besides, one wonders whom Freud could have had in mind when he refers to the 'modern artists' – perhaps someone like Kandinsky or even Klee, whose paintings elaborate and rest on a sophisticated theory of colour, which in itself is based on the 'physics' of sound (Figures 9, 10, 11, Appendix).

Let us then remind ourselves of the somewhat light-hearted and quite off-hand treatment that the topic of art receives from Freud in connection with its potential elevation to the position of a *Weltanschauung*: "Art is almost always harmless and beneficent; it does not seek to be anything but an illusion" (SE 22: 160), which stands in stark contrast to the analogy drawn between the structure of the psychic apparatus, the economic relationship among the three components of 'id', 'ego', and 'super-ego', and modern painting, especially its aesthetic effect of blended, horizon-less colour, its blurred borders and lines of distinction.

The reconciliation of such an obvious contradiction is to be found along the lines of the three main theoretical currents in Freud's own thinking: the structural/meta-psychological, the sociological/cultural, and the analytical/technical, even though the latter is of lesser value to the immediate task of our discussion, given the fact that the problem of art in it (apart from the fact that Freud, at times refers to psychoanalysis as the art of interpretation) is much more latent, and buried in the application of the psychoanalytic technique itself. As might be suspected, any strict distinction among these three currents is already a perversion of the overall image, since these, not unlike the modern painting Freud calls onto for a reference, intermingle in a very fluid manner. About the only place where such a line of demarcation makes some sense and is defensible, relates to the question of art itself, moreover, it is perhaps the only efficient and easily available means towards an understanding of Freud's seemingly very convoluted statements about it.

Perhaps the most important of such statements, comes some 12 years before the paper on *Weltanschauung*, in a short exposition entitled *Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning*, written in 1911. It is within the confines of this short essay, that Freud proposes clearly his theory of pleasure/reality principle, and its structural integration into the progressively elaborate, complicated and intriguing modeling of the human mind.

Starting from the clinical observations of neurosis, Freud's text proposes to consider the stance of an individual to his or her reality: "...we are now confronted with the task of investigating the development of the relation of neurotics and of mankind in general to reality, and in this way of bringing psychological significance of the real external world into the structure of our theories" (SE 12: 218). Not surprisingly, the entire problematic will rest on, precisely, movement between realities, or more accurately on repression, and the practical elimination of a floating/oceanic reality – we are speaking here of course of the famous thesis concerning the pleasure principle and the reality principle. Most interesting in this connection, is a whole series of compensations and partial resolutions, of which art will be one, and the fully mature ego, the most sophisticated, efficient and repressive compensatory mechanism that operates in the same vein. All this, in its progressive incarnations, falls under the general name and structure of the reality principle:

> ...the state of psychical rest was originally disturbed by the peremptory demands of internal needs. When this happened, whatever was thought of (wished for) was simply presented in a hallucinatory manner, just as still happens to-day with our dream-thoughts

> every night. It was only the non-occurrence of the expected satisfaction, the disappointment experienced, that led to the abandonment of this attempt at satisfaction by means of hallucination. Instead of it, the psychical apparatus had to decide to form a conception of the real circumstances in the external world and to endeavour to make a real alteration in them. A new principle of mental functioning was thus introduced; what was presented in the mind was no longer what was agreeable but what was real, even if it happened to be disagreeable. Thus setting-up of the *reality principle* proved to be a momentous step (SE 12: 219).

In a very ambitious gesture, à la Darwin, all the more ambitious considering the brevity, condensation and breadth of the discussion, Freud proposes to re-count a chain of phylogenetic, evolutionary consequences of this dynamic exchange between the pleasure and the reality principles. So that, the setting up of the reality principle leads to the heightened importance of the sense-organs, which consequently give rise to the condition of consciousness, which, in turn, enables the mechanism of attention (since now reality must be observed) and its functional operative modes of notation/memory and passing of judgment, i.e., of deciding what is true/false, what agrees with reality and what does not. Here the judgment most frequently comes down against the impulses of the pleasure principle, since these are always in the position of irremediable challenge to the rationality that the reality principle had made so much effort to promulgate and establish. It is also here, that action as appropriate motor discharge, in agreement with reality, takes over, whose most repressive inhibitory elaboration manifests itself in the force and power of abstract thinking. But even at this point, further adjustments are necessary, since the drives of the pleasure principle prove to be continually unwieldy and undiminished. This sort of adjustment finds 'shelter' under the split that is effectuated in the thinking apparatus, which lowers its threshold and intensity through a tear in its own fabric:

> With the introduction of the reality principle one species of thought-activity was split off; it was kept free from reality-testing and remained subordinated to the pleasure principle alone. This activity is *phantasying* [sic], which begins already in children's play, and later, continued as *day-dreaming*, abandons dependence on real objects (SE 12: 222).

The chain-reaction proposed by Freud, is almost something akin to a chemical formula, which, with every progressive step, accomplishes a change of state, on the molecular level. This seems to be the notion that not only governs Freud's intellectual proceedings, but is also related to the general progression of life – its deriviation from the inorganic, chemical stage, of which Freud is acutely aware, and whose image is incorporated in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), as the theory of the death-drive. In fact, in his *Autobiographical Study* (1925), such transformative analogy is presented explicitly:

> …the depth-psychology revealed by psycho-analysis was in fact the psychology of the normal mind. Our path has been like that of chemistry: the great qualitative differences between substances were traced back to quantitative variations in the proportions in which the same elements were combined (SE 20: 56).

The theme of organic vs. inorganic had entered our discussion to a certain degree already, and we will find its further elaboration into a principle of engagement with reality, in someone like August Strindberg, Robert Musil, or even Émile Zola, who professes the procedure of dissection, as the writing tool. All these procedures/analogies also find a prominent place in Freud's meta-psychology (we have already seen that the title of one his most important lectures dons the name of *The Dissection of the Psychical Personality*), and thus locate him firmly in the logic of the times, its existential, scientific, philosophical and artistic vocabulary.

But we seem to be speaking here about more than analogies and something more like living elements, or at least methods of activating them. Even if it could be said that, after all, Freud's science is a method of analysis only and thus simply one option among many as to how life could be sliced and viewed, the analysis here and in other areas of fin de siècle culture is itself the model of reality – one leads an analytical life, the life in need of dissection, as the continual proposal for the most accurate description of how things come to be, how they are accomplished and maintained. This is the shape that the space of the fully mature ego ultimately takes in Freud's set-up – i.e., it is primarily a research ego, the 'I' which stands at the crossroads, at the intersection of the three information streams (external reality, internal impulses and the abstract evaluation of its own self) being always bit by bit, absorbed into all of them, but also standing at the center, as the point of contact among them, thus being in the position of what we have already identified as the vanishing-point in painterly perspective – meaning it is both a part and apart of the overall structure, operating according to the *aesthetics of disappearance* (Paul Virilio). Such is the case not only because the ego works-over, digests whatever comes its way, but also because it is under the constant danger of losing perspective, of not being able to deal effectively with proportions and distances, with their distribution and maintenance. The economic set-up of the sort is evident in Freud's discussion concerning the reality and the pleasure principles:

> Actually the substitution of the reality principle for the pleasure principle implies no deposing of the pleasure principle, but only a safeguarding of it. A momentary pleasure, uncertain in its results, is given up, but only in order to gain along the new path an assured pleasure at a later time (SE 12: 223).

In the realm of individuality, it is the ego that is in charge of such a safeguarding mechanics; speaking in terms of culture, it is precisely the surface of a *Weltanschauung* and its actualization through religion, philosophy or science, which fills this function, although the first two, and especially religion, accomplish this task in an objectionable way, by overcompensating in the economy of the distribution of the psychic forces, in the end, losing touch exactly with what they mean to protect – reality.

Not surprisingly, then, in this earlier text, Freud also elevates science to a more privileged position, albeit a qualified one: "It is *science* which comes nearest to succeeding in that conquest [of the pleasure principle; its safeguarding]; science too, however, offers intellectual pleasure during its work and promises practical gain in the end" (SE 12: 224). All of this we have already encountered in the course of our discussion. The interesting question, is the one in the middle, when topographically, together with Freud, we ask: what lies in-between the two, what kind of space is being created via this method of safeguarding and analysis, of paying attention and through it, reality-testing; what kind of perspective does it engender? Here we need to return to the problem of art.

Probably the most extensive and clear discussion of the *artistic drive*, if we may call it that and add it to Freud's drive theory, takes place on the pages of the text we have been engaging for a while now, *Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning* (1911), that is, during the elaboration and introduction of the pleasure and the reality principles. Art is one in the series of compensations for the 'loss' of the pleasure principle, and figures under number six on the list of points Freud addresses:

> *Art* brings about a reconciliation between the two principles [the pleasure and the reality principles] in a peculiar way. An artist is originally a man who turns away from reality because he cannot come to terms with the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction which it at first demands, and who allows his erotic and ambitious wishes full play in the life of phantasy. He finds the way back to reality, however, from this world of phantasy by making use of special gifts to mould his phantasies into truths of a new kind, which are valued by men as precious reflections of reality. Thus in a certain fashion he actually becomes the hero, the king, the creator, or the favourite he desired to be, without following the long roundabout path of making real alterations in the external world. But he can only achieve this because other men feel the same dissatisfaction as he does with the renunciation demanded by reality, and because that dissatisfaction, which results from the replacement of the pleasure principle by the reality principle, is itself a part of reality (SE 12: 224).

Years later, in the *Autobiographical Study*, Freud repeats this assessment almost word for word, only now making a specific clinical connection between the artist and the neurotic:

> The realm of imagination was seen to be a 'reservation' made during the painful transition from the pleasure principle to the reality principle in order to provide a

> substitute for instinctual satisfactions which had to be given up in real life. The artist, like the neurotic, had withdrawn from an unsatisfying reality into this world of imagination; but, unlike the neurotic, he knew how to find a way back from it and once more to get a firm foothold in reality. His creations, works of art, were the imaginary satisfaction of unconscious wishes, just as dreams are; and like them they were in the nature of compromises, since they too were forced to avoid any open conflict with the forces of repression. But they differed from the asocial, narcissistic products of dreaming in that they were calculated to arouse sympathetic interest in other people and were able to evoke and to satisfy the same unconscious wishful impulses in them too. Besides this, they made use of the perceptual pleasure of formal beauty as what I have called an 'incentive bonus' (SE 20: 64–65).

The concept of 'incentive bonus' appears for the first time, in Freud's book *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905). Speaking from the aesthetic perspective, it is a way of enticing the casual observer of art or artistic-activity, into its seductive realm of fantasy and day-dreaming. It is therefore, all the more surprising, that Freud, given this kind of general resonance, denies art the possibility to be the social/cultural, aggregate/mass adjustment technique, given that it is never solely isolated and confined to the creative personality of the artist, but streams into the consciousness of the social world. All this is underpinned by the apparent powerlessness of psychoanalysis, which "…can do nothing towards elucidating the nature of the artistic gift, nor can it explain the means by which the artist works – the artistic technique" (SE 20: 65).

Perhaps exactly here we should be suspicious, and re-evaluate this statement against Freud's own explanation of how artistic activity happens, although it should also be said that the expressed doubt probably goes deeper and means to approach the issue of why some among us are able to expresses themselves artistically, in the first place, and others cannot? But as we have been able to surmise from the two, extensive excerpts about art, the artistic activity can be quite accurately (at least from the standpoint of psychoanalysis) reduced to the general confines of an adjustment technique, that mitigates between the broad day-light of the external reality, and the murky, dark caverns of our desires, wishes and drives. The way it accomplishes and carries out this task is not only through the world of fantasy or wishful-thinking, but also much more *tangibly*, in the simulacrum of play. This is how Freud answers his rhetorical call of discovering ourselves in the artistic activity like creative writing:

> Should we not look for the first traces of imaginative activity as early as in childhood? The child's best-loved and most intense occupation is with his play of games. Might we not say that every child at play behaves like a creative writer, in that he creates a world of his own, or, rather, re-arranges the things of his world in a new way which pleases him? It would be wrong to think he does not take that world seriously; on the contrary, he takes his play very seriously and he expends large amounts of emotion on it. The opposite of play is not what is serious but what is real… The creative writer does the same as the child at play. He creates a world of phantasy which he takes very seriously – that is, which he invests with large amounts of emotion – while separating it sharply from reality (SE 19: 143–144).

Freud himself, from the beginning, seems to be engaged in this sort of activity. As early as 1895, in *Studies on Hysteria*, he opens the discussion on one of the five hysterical cases comprising the book (Fräulein Elisabeth von R.) in this manner:

> I have not always been a psychotherapist. Like other neuro-pathologists, I was trained to employ local diagnoses and electro-prognosis, and it still strikes me myself as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories [*Novellen*] and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science (SE 2: 160).

The two modules of play and reality, and one's ability to move freely between them (like the artist, or the creative writer does) is indeed the test of the difference between a psychotic stance, and the one that constructs for itself two, well integrated but separate spaces; a kind of produced legibility of the external world through the organ of, what we might refer to as the 'artificial ear', which plays and resonates, makes things happen in all seriousness, but is also responsive and through such a responsiveness, limited in its reach. And as Freud further points out:

> Language has preserved this relationship between children's play and poetic creation. It gives [in German] the name of *'Spiel'* ['play'] to those forms of imaginative writing which require to be linked to tangible objects and which are capable of representation. It speaks of *'Lustspiel'* or *'Trauerspiel'* ['comedy' or 'tragedy': literally, 'pleasure play' or

> 'mourning play'] and describes those who carry out the representation as *'Schauspieler'* ['players': literally 'show-players'][69] (SE19: 144).

In this manner, we have identified something that seems to be the latent operative principle of the psychoanalytic theory itself, its *artistic-drive*, which reaches out into the space of the real, via the mechanism of play, like an amplifier whose technical intricacies connect the internal specifications of its mechanism with the world and its materiality, precisely through the output of its message, whether the latter is a child's game, a piece of creative-writing, a painting, or musical/poetic sound. This, in the end, is what the ego is charged with – with the ability and the tension of supporting itself in all seriousness at play with reality;[70] this is the only way that it can garner to itself enough manoeuvrability and flexibility, to serve as the interpretive/analytical organ that mediates among the three information streams, which threaten constantly to overload it.

The ego, then, is itself a skilfully and artfully trained player. It is a *Schauspieler*, an actor and a show-man, in the sense that it shows itself to be immediately in the place of the id, as its replacement value and a space of renewal into which new potential impulses stemming from the id can and must enter. But also, because it shows itself in this way and through such showing, brings the world into relief, it makes a weighty matter of the theatre of display, albeit a one which knows when it is time for the curtain to be drawn. The neurotic, in his sensual, psychotic overload, possess exactly the same store of artfully calibrated display-notions, but forgets the direction, and even more drastically, forgets himself in the momentum of the staging-gesture and thus removes the notion of reality from the ideology of the perceptual apparatus by eliminating the concept of play or art, from his vernacular. All this, in a very condensed sense, is encapsulated in Freud's cryptic phrase, which appears and the end of *Dissection of the Personality*: '*Wo es war, soll ich werden*' ('where the id was, there ego shall be'), and it is worth considering the sentence that immediately precedes this famous expression, since it relates to the overall effect, the end result which psychoanalysis itself desires, hopes for and attempts to effectuate:

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[69] *Schauspieler* is also the regular, modern German word for an actor.

[70] This is the part of Freud that Jacques Lacan recuperates and reinvents, in his project of going back to the roots of Freudian theory, under the concept of *jouissance* (of play, game, enjoyment, etc.).

> It may be admitted that the therapeutic efforts of psycho-analysis have chosen a similar line of approach [as certain mystical practices, which may lead to different regions of the mind]. Its intention is, indeed, to strengthen the ego, to make it more independent of the super-ego, to widen its field of perception and enlarge its organization, so that it can appropriate fresh portions of the id. Where the id was, there ego shall be. It is a work of culture – not unlike the draining of the Zuider Zee [sic!] (SE 22: 80).

It is only after carefully considering and emphasizing the division between reality and pleasure, and the role of the ego in the formation of the self, that we can start comprehending the, otherwise, quite dense and somewhat enigmatic formulations that appear in another of Freud's seminal texts, *The Ego and the Id* (1923). Whereas it is always easy to conclude that the fundamental premise of psychoanalysis is the division between what is conscious and what is unconscious, all the more so, since Freud stresses this point on many occasions himself, including at the beginning of the aforementioned text (only to withdraw from such a division when the structural implications of his theory are at stake) this kind of almost involuntary conceptual reaction leaves us empty-handed, without a resolution as to the nature and the shape of what is actually in view. In fact, in a counter-intuitive and seemingly self-contradictory expression, it would be more accurate to say, that psycho-analysis is a psychology of consciousness, *par excellence*, not only because it is an act of constant and unceasing analysis, but also because the only meeting-place where the exchange between psychic energies can take place, and onto whose confines, if the analytical adjustment is to be accomplished, the unconscious information nodules must be impressed, is the ego. The latter, as we will see later, should be understood in its physical constitution, most literally, since as Freud says, the conscious ego "…is first and foremost a body-ego" (SE 19: 27). We will return to this formulation shortly, since it is crucial to the logic of the body, its artistic elaboration and fragmentation which extends to practically all layers of reality, the way I am trying to present it in a convincing fashion, as the irremediable *modus operandi* of the fin de siècle rationality.

To say that Freud, when all is said and done, constructs and engages with the world through the philosophy of consciousness, is to also differentiate it from its classical elaboration, à la Descartes, for instance. In the most general sense, Descartes promotes a *reflective/contemplative* consciousness, whereas Freud's already modernized, time-specific notion should be characterized as *refractive/projective* consciousness. As we have seen in the case of Descartes, this reflection, in its most extreme, negative moment, doubts its own existence and everything around it. This is how it gains awareness and proves its own independence and self-constitution. It is a mind that cannot wilfully negate itself when it is properly exercised, because it cannot escape the mechanism of its own rationality, given that the latter is not simply its quality but its essence. That essence makes it into a structure of parallelisms, a structure which overlays itself, whose relation is self-relation, where thinking is being.

In contrast, Freud's construct invents for itself a relational dynamism which responds to a foreign element; a space that is always in danger of being occupied and invaded, and which, in turn, occupies and invades a reality which is never totally its own, where doubt turns into the certainty of a pursuit after an unknown and unidentified substance. It is here where destruction becomes the kernel of the most intense germinating forces and drives, which find themselves under the incessantly dissonant orchestration of the pleasure principle, whose utmost satisfaction is written in the pages of another score, the death drive. The latter, in a manner of speaking, wants to settle all scores and remove the tension of differences in levels and their realities by falling back into the inorganic state.

Being thus resigned to the condition of meandering analytical judgments, the ego not only performs the act of breaking-down as a methodology that looks out into the world, but, because it is also under a constant threat of such a break-down in its own consistency, also mimics it by applying the rationality of a split or break-down, to its own surface, thus becoming a self-contradictory mass which refracts and projects the play of the inorganic onto the confines of its own body. This is how it inscribes the gesture of the ultimate loss of its physical consistency (losing it in effigy, with every psychic readjustment) into the adhesiveness of its psychophysics. And ultimately the body-ego's hard won independence via re-adjustment and reconciliation of all the forces that work against it, the friction which wears it down and desires to rip it apart, is nothing more than simply an aesthetic-effect. This expression, which might at first strike us as very banal, contains all the theoretical gravity and precision of what Freud already proposes under the auspices of play and its seriousness. This is why art in the aesthetics of its play is so seductive. It inspires the moment of finding oneself in the instant of separation, not only from our own ego, but from the 'thing' that now faces us as a foreign materiality, in which, we must nonetheless identify something, whether it is pleasure or ultimately ourselves:

> …the essential *ars poetica* lies in the technique of overcoming the feeling of repulsion in us which is undoubtedly connected with the barriers that rise between each single ego and the others… The writer softens the character of his egoistic daydreams by altering and disguising it, and he bribes us by the purely formal – that is, aesthetic – yield of pleasure which he offers us in the presentation of his phantasies. We give the name of an *incentive bonus*, or a *fore-pleasure*, to a yield of pleasure such us this… In my opinion, all the aesthetic pleasure which a creative writer affords us has the character of a fore-pleasure of this kind, and our actual enjoyment of an imaginative work proceeds from a liberation of tensions in our minds (SE 19: 153).

It is precisely the analytic technique that, via the procedure of liberation of tensions, means to set the patient into the mode of play, in which he can find himself again; a play which not only goes back to his childhood and the displaced memories or the ancient drama of the Oedipus Complex, but one also, which must be performed currently, whose stage is the presence of unmitigated and nonnegotiable contemporaneous circumstances, which must be overcome. We are thus presented with a technique of overcoming (psychoanalysis), which deals with the many repulsions and barriers, that arise between each single ego, as Freud says above, and the external reality in general; a technique as overcoming that exchanges the overcompensating plasticity of symptoms for the much cooler detachment of the real game as something placed *within* the space of the real, and not a reality which is one's 'private theatre'.

This seemingly grand re-calibration, is not a matter of grave and monumental changes, but very subtle adjustments in perception, in the way one sees and recognizes things, the way one apprehends, evaluates, and makes judgments of discrimination among impulses, stimuli and micro-realities; in one word, it is an issue of aesthetics that is at stake here which must be learned and acquired, as much as is possible. Such aesthetics is already far removed from its standard philosophical embodiment as judgments concerning the formal concept of the beautiful only (although as we hear from Freud, it may also include these) and operates according to a very advanced formula, which means to mitigate this seemingly unbridgeable distance between reality and what is not covered by its 'blanket statement', by making the ego feel firmly *implanted* in reality which envelops it. An expression of this kind, as we will see, finds its way into the aesthetic theory of *Einfühlung* (empathy) which presents us with one of the most interesting inventions around the turn of the century, and which expels and exudes its logic into the moment of visibility.

Nonetheless, it should also be admitted that Freud grants such a central position to the conscious ego, somewhat reluctantly: "…psychoanalysis cannot situate the essence of the psychical in consciousness, but is obliged to regard consciousness as a quality of the psychical, which may be present in addition to other qualities or may be absent" (SE 19: 13). This sentence appears at the very beginning of *The Ego and the Id*, and surprises with its non-commitment, especially when we take Freud's conclusion that the ego is the body-ego, first and foremost, into consideration. It seems that we might be dealing here with Freud's own resistance to an acknowledgement, which, instead of simplifying his theory, complicates it by turning it into a piece of creative writing instead of a scientific exposé.

The refracted/fractured consciousness is the most enduring and important contribution of the psychoanalytic paradigm to the general ontology of existence, not the unconscious, which has its own, long philosophical history and to which very little can be added, apart perhaps from the renewed acknowledgement of its existence and effects. And this is exactly the definition Freud espouses:

> We have found – that is, we have been obliged to assume – that very powerful mental processes or ideas exist (and here a quantitative or *economic* factor comes into question for the first time) which can produce all the effects in mental life that ordinary ideas do (including effects that can in their turn become conscious as ideas), though they themselves do not become conscious (SE 19: 14).

Even though this leads Freud to distinguish between two instances of the unconscious, one descriptive and the other dynamic, the first one being but a mere sign of the second one, which, in this dichotomy, attempts to capture the functionality of the entire process, whether or not we see something as conscious or unconscious, descriptively or dynamically depends on the point of view, or as Freud says: "…the distinction between conscious and unconscious is in the last resort a question of perception, which must be answered 'yes' or 'no', and the act of perception itself tells us nothing of the reason why a thing is or is not perceived" (SE 19: 15–16). The burden of proof, and really, the only choice to find anything, to be certain and accurate about something rests with the ego. This is the main reason why the ego becomes such a complicated structure in psychoanalysis, since it is (to use a metaphor) a 'beast of burden', the corpuscle of practically everything that must happen, in order that the psychic organism remains within the bounds of perceived control:

> We have formed the idea that in each individual there is a coherent organization of mental processes; and we call this his *ego*. It is to this ego that consciousness is attached; the ego controls the approaches to motility – that is, to the discharge of excitations into the external world; it is the mental agency which supervises all its own constituent processes… From this ego proceed the repressions, too, by means of which it is sought to exclude certain trends in the mind not merely from consciousness but also from other forms of effectiveness and activity. In analysis these trends which have been shut out stand in opposition to the ego, and the analysis is faced with the task of removing the resistances which the ego displays against concerning itself with the repressed (SE 19: 17).

We must remind ourselves that what in English is known as the ego makes the concept seem already quite stylized, and perhaps even something that is already a reformulation of the most basic self. Such assessment is of course misguided, since as is well known

Freud's language is most elementary, based on everyday signifiers and their weightless anonymity. So that the ego, is simply the 'I' (*das Ich*), the id acquires the neutral sign of the 'it' (*das Es*, whose importance and resonance we will be able to gauge more accurately during our discussion of namelessness)[71] and what is known as the super-ego, retains its spatial directionality of being above the self, more immediately, through the semiotic compound of 'over-I' (Über-Ich). It is these components that add themselves together, to comprise what Freud refers to as the *organ* (or in fact the organism) of the ego. And the curious problem here is that the ego contains the repressed unconscious forces within itself, thus complicating immensely not only the concept of the unconscious but also the functionality of the conscious mind:

> Since … there can be no doubt that … resistance emanates from this ego and belongs to it, we find ourselves in an unforeseen situation. We have come upon something in the ego itself which is also unconscious, which behaves exactly like the repressed – that is, which produces powerful effects without itself being conscious and which requires special work before it can be made conscious. From the point of view of analytic practice, the consequence of this discovery is that we land in endless obscurities and difficulties if we keep to our habitual forms of expression and try, for instance, to derive neuroses from a conflict between the conscious and the unconscious. We shall have to substitute for this antithesis another, taken from our insight into the structural conditions of the mind – the antithesis between the *coherent* ego and the repressed which is split off from it (SE 19: 17, my emphasis).

Such realization sets into motion a series of profound and self-contradictory consequences, especially for the concept of the unconscious:

> We recognize that the *Ucs.* does not coincide with the repressed; it is still true that all that is repressed is *Ucs.*, but not all that is *Ucs.* is repressed. A part of the ego, too – and heaven knows how important a part – may be *Ucs.*, undoubtedly is *Ucs.* And this *Ucs.* belonging to the ego is not latent like the *Pcs.* [pre-conscious]; for if it were, it could not be activated without becoming *Cs.*, and the process of making it conscious would not encounter such great difficulties. When we find ourselves thus confronted by the necessity of postulating a third *Ucs.*, which is not repressed, we must admit that the characteristic of being unconscious begins to lose significance for us. It becomes a quality which can have many meanings, a quality which we are unable to make, as we should have hoped to do, the basis of far-reaching and inevitable conclusions.

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[71] The term *das Es*, as Freud himself explains (SE 19: 23) goes back, in the first place to Georg Groddeck, and then certainly back to Nietzsche. See also, 'Editor's Introduction' (SE 19: 7).

> Nevertheless we must beware of ignoring this characteristic, for the property of being conscious or not is in the last resort our one beacon-light in the darkness of depth-psychology (SE 19: 18).

And thus, again, Freud ends up at the cross-roads of self-contradiction, the result of which is a new definition of the entire psychic apparatus in terms of the ego, with unconscious components. It is a topographical mapping of the mind, where particular attention must be paid to scaling and positioning of each component in relation to the other ones, and in this sense we are speaking here of a psychological 'calculus' which operates on the basis of an economic paradigm that is bound to the principle of differentiation as transfer, flow and displacement between levels of intensity.

Given the conclusion that the contrast between consciousness and unconsciousness leads to irreconcilable ambiguities which stymie any kind of adequately focused view into the functioning of the human mind, any subsequent investigation must be bound to the system of consciousness, in both general and specifically theoretical notions:

> Now all our knowledge is invariably bound up with consciousness. We can come to know even the *Ucs.* only by making it conscious… We already know the point from which we have to start in this connection. We have said that consciousness is the *surface* of the mental apparatus; that is, we have ascribed it as a function to a system which is spatially the first one reached from the external world – and spatially not only in the functional sense but, on this occasion, also in the sense of anatomical dissection. Our investigations too must take this perceiving surface as a starting-point (SE 19: 19).

Having identified such a starting-point, the difficulty now becomes to figure out and describe how can anything at all become conscious?

The crux of the matter comes down to the way things bond with other elements, like chemical particles which create compounds and thus new substances, in order to arise as conscious perceptions. When the information stream comes from the direction of the external reality, the bonding mechanism is that of word-presentations; when it originates internally it manifests itself through memory-traces. But the bottom line in both cases is that things, in order to have a psychologically significant effect, must be transformed into perception, of which the memory-traces, not unlike the outward bound perceptions, are also an instance. It therefore follows that:

> The question, 'How does a thing become conscious?' would thus be more advantageously stated: 'How does a thing become preconscious?' And the answer would be: 'Through becoming connected with the word-presentations corresponding to it' (SE 19: 20).

The interesting factor to consider here is that such word-presentations are themselves a result of memory-traces, or rather their *acoustic resonance*, since:

> Verbal residues are derived primarily from *auditory perceptions*, so that the system *Pcs.* has, as it were, a special sensory source. The visual components of word-presentations are secondary, acquired through reading, and may to begin with be left on one side; so may the motor images of words, which, except with deaf-mutes, play the part of auxiliary indications. In essence a word is after all the mnemic residue of a word that has been *heard* (SE 19: 21, my emphasis).

It is at this point that we encounter the nexus of the psychoanalytic procedure, which simply mediates between the external and the internal environments, by attempting to facilitate new paths of connection between them via language as word-presentations (the talking-cure). We also arrive at a point of inflection in our own project, which means to establish sonority and sound, as the paradigm according to which most of the turn of the century expressive/existential ventures operate.

The importance of hearing and sound to the construction of perception is emphasized by Freud in the adjoining diagram (Figure 12, Appendix) to the text of *The Ego and the Id*, as well as this somewhat 'rugged' sentence: "We may add, perhaps, that the ego wears a 'cap of hearing' – on one side only, as we learn from cerebral anatomy. It might be said to wear it awry" (SE 19: 25). Sound, then, is the general principle of consciousness, its construction/showing, its sustenance as well as stability, as is evident from how Freud relates imaging to the unconscious:

> Thinking in pictures is, therefore, only a very incomplete form of becoming conscious. In some way, too, it stands nearer to unconscious processes than does thinking in words, and it is unquestionably older than the latter both ontogenetically and phylogenetically (SE 19: 21).

Now we can also apprehend the intriguing formulation, which appears in a few places in Freud's writing, and consigns the death-drive to a soundless, mute condition: "…we are driven to conclude that the death instincts are by their very nature mute and that the clamour of life proceeds for the most part from Eros" (SE 19: 46). Eros or the libido as the life affirming drives constitute this very unique part of the id that can never be quite sublimated, repressed and quieted down, hence the importance of the sexual amortization in the life of an individual, as well as in Freud's analytic/theoretical construction. But the importance and meaning of the contrast between noise and noiselessness, sound and silence reaches beyond this immediate concern, because for anything to appear at all, for it to become consciousness and thus exhibit itself as part of the ego, it must be amplified through words and their sonorous inflection. Sound then, is not simply a metaphor, an analogy for how everything transpires, but the operational principle, the notation key under whose auspices reality comes into its own.

Having thus exposed a latent but absolutely crucial theory of sound (which we still have to relate to the theory of art), we may now begin to understand better the positioning of the ego in the entire set-up, whose function is not simply a passive one, but first and foremost an active one, as the mechanism, or rather, more accurately the method, which translates both the internal and the external stimuli into a *coherent* *'organicism'* (not unlike the one we spoke about in connection to Riegl) of a receptive surface:

> It is easy to see that the ego is that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world through the medium of the *Pcpt.-Cs.*; in a sense it is an extension of the surface-differentiation. Moreover, the ego seeks to bring the influence of the external world to bear upon the id and its tendencies, and endeavours to substitute the reality principle for the pleasure principle which reigns unrestrictedly in the id… The ego represents what may be called reason and common sense, in contrast to the id, which contains the passions (SE 19: 25).

The relationship that these two surfaces enter, the economic trade, is always an auditory trace, whose identity is found in words, their signification but more importantly simply their tone, just like Anna O.'s stream of consciousness whose vernacular forgets the formal linguistic restrictions and simply sounds out its message in a play of showing and vanishing, like the *fort/da* (gone/there) play of Freud's grandson. The boy, trying to come to terms with his mother's frequent and sudden absences, resorts to the topographically choreographed activity of letting objects go and then retrieving them.[72] It is a play of and with distances that attempts to gain mastery over the absence these procure. This play, in which audition is by default engaged, will prove crucial not only to psychoanalysis, but the entire fin de siècle setting, whose musical rhythm, in its attempt to coordinate a series of crucial existential absences, swells and lets go as it tries to imitate the missing quality of experience.

Freud reaches a similar, acoustically-inspired conclusion towards the end of *The Ego and the Id*, when he also attempts to bring the concept of the super-ego into the fold of the general scheme: "Our tentative answer will be that it is as impossible for the super-ego as for the ego to disclaim its origin from things heard; for it is a part of the ego and remains accessible to consciousness by way of these word-presentations (concepts, abstractions)" (SE 19: 52).

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[72] The entire episode is described in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, pp. 14–17.

Acoustics as theme and procedure is also in evidence on the pages of Freud's writings about the intricacies of the analytical technique, and in the general recommendations as to its practice. So that, for instance, in *Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psycho-analysis*, Freud uses the following, stark metaphor:

> Just as the patient must relate everything that his self-observation can detect, and keep back all the logical and affective objections that seek to induce him to make a selection from among them, so the doctor must put himself in a position to make use of everything he is told for the purposes of interpretation and of recognizing the concealed unconscious material without substituting a censorship of his own for the selection that the patient has forgone. To put it in a formula: he must turn his own unconscious like a receptive organ towards the transmitting unconscious of the patient. He must adjust himself to the patient as a telephone receiver is adjusted to the transmitting microphone. Just as the receiver converts back into sound waves the electric oscillations in the telephone line which were set up by sound waves, so the doctor's unconscious is able, from the derivatives of the unconscious which are communicated to him, to reconstruct that unconscious, which has determined the patient's free associations (SE 12: 115–116).

This procedure, amounts to what Freud designates in the same essay as *gleichschwebende Aufmerksamkeit*, or 'evenly-suspended attention':

> The technique [of psychoanalysis] is a very simple one. As we shall see, it rejects the use of any special expedient (even that of taking notes). It consists simply in not directing one's notice to anything in particular and in maintaining the same 'evenly-suspended attention' (as I have called it) in the face of all that one hears… Or, to put it purely in terms of technique: 'He [the analyst] should simply listen, and not bother about whether he is keeping anything in mind (SE 12: 111–112).

In other words, the analyst should simply let the patient's voice play. Words that are vociferously expelled both from the thin layer of unimportant everyday experiences, as well as, hopefully, along with such static interference, from the inner depth of the 'unconscious' impulses are streamed into binding channels of communication that analysis is meant to facilitate. In this manner, it effectuates the desired condition of things playing themselves out, as they are repeated, for the repressed possesses the uncanny quality of *Widerholungszwang*, the rhythmicity of the 'compulsion to repeat' – yet another expression of the musical 'algorithm' whose general outline is already seen in the mentioned *fort/da* mechanics of distantiation and bringing closer.

10. *Plasticity, Projection, and Acoustic Manipulation*

Among the many equivalent and progressively narrower formulations of the psychoanalytic practice, we find one that sets the concept of distance at its center:

> For the work of analysis proceeds best if the patient's pathogenic experiences belong to the past, so that his ego can stand at a distance from them (SE 23: 232).

The purpose, as always, is to bring the pressure of the internal impulsive life, into some kind of coherent reconciliation with the reality at large. Here, we must remind ourselves, that Freud imparts this kind of ability for coherent synthesis, to the artist and his art, but he also mentions the concept in relation to the patient who is to undergo such a procedure of coherent synthesis, and which, in the end, can only be arrived at by the flexibility of the patient's own ego, towards which analysis can only show sometimes the most efficient way, and at other times only indicate its outlines:

> Not every neurotic has a high talent for sublimation; one can assume of many of them that they would not have fallen ill at all if they had possessed the art of sublimating their instincts… It must further be borne in mind that many people fall ill precisely from an attempt to sublimate their instincts beyond the degree permitted by their organization and that in those who have a capacity for sublimation the process usually takes place of itself as soon as their inhibitions have been overcome by analysis (SE 12: 119).

It is precisely the artist who displays such a heightened ability for sublimation, and in that sense, the difference between an individual who is artistically inclined and a 'normal' patient, is not one of quality but only of quantity in the ability of the ego to flex its own structure in the direction of the id, and then, be strong enough to return from such a journey back to reality. From this assessment, it is only a short step towards a conclusion that there is a necessary asset that distinguishes the ego from the other psychic enclosures, which analysis is specifically designed to redress in its deficiency – we could generally identify such asset and its periodic lack as the scarcity of flexibility or *plasticity*.

On this basis, Freud proposes to differentiate among different types of individualities, which are more or less prone towards the analytic adjustment as a function of the plastic ability of the ego. This subject matter, in its dual signification since it is a matter of the subject, is made into a point of discussion, very late in Freud's career, when he attempts to appraise the long run of his intellectual efforts, as well as the effectiveness and the many vicissitudes of the analytic practice. It appears in one of the most intriguing and important texts in the entire oeuvre, *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* (1937):

> If we advance a step further in our analytic experience, we come upon resistances of another kind, which we can no longer localize and which seem to depend on fundamental conditions in the mental apparatus… We come across people, for instance, to whom we should be inclined to attribute a special 'adhesiveness of the libido'. The processes which the treatment sets in motion in them are so much slower than in other people because, apparently, they cannot make up their minds to detach libidinal cathexes [*Besetzungen*, i.e., occupations] from one object and displace them on to another… One meets with the opposite type of person too, in whom the libido seems particularly mobile; it enters readily upon the new cathexes suggested by analysis, abandoning its former ones in exchange for them. The difference between the two types is comparable to the one felt by a sculptor [*der bildende Künstler*], according to whether he works in hard stone or soft clay [*der Ton*]. Unfortunately, in this second type the results of analysis often turn out to be very impermanent: the new cathexes are soon given up once more, and we have an impression not of having worked in clay, but of having written on water… In another group of cases we are surprised by an attitude in our patients which can only be put down to a *depletion of the plasticity*, the capacity for change and further development, which we should ordinarily expect. We are, it is true, prepared to find in analysis a certain amount of psychic inertia… But with the patients I here have in mind, all the mental processes, relationships and distributions of force are unchangeable, fixed and rigid (SE 23: 241–242, my emphasis).

It is easily noticeable that the conclusion of unchangeable, rigid and inflexible characterization is a misnomer of sorts, since it only applies to the lack of the desired outcome and not the actual process. For it is indeed more correct to say, that all types of resistances, including the three categories described above which Freud is somewhat at a loss to explain structurally, involve the concept of plasticity and the mechanics of its presence or absence in varying degrees and proportions. This is so, even though it is only to the third case, that Freud specifically attributes the trait of depletion of plasticity. In fact, each of the three cases could be characterized in those terms, or more exactly, in terms of the directionality such plasticity is bound to take and thus become available as the raw-material through which the ego can work on itself.

Of special interest is the analogy employed by Freud to highlight the difference between the first and the second category of patients and their suitability for analysis.

In direct opposition to the first type of the self which is subsumed under the captivating delineation of libido's adhesiveness, the second category distinguishes itself by its exaggerated and loose movement, its propensity to flow out into the slightest topographical inclination, being thus unreliable as to the potential permanent resolution of the impinging pressure under whose merciless constriction the ego operates. In other words, and more straightforwardly, the problem that we encounter at this point is one of the overly liberal tendency for a compromise (the second case) and its too conservative embodiment (the first case). These two types of encounter with analysis and through it with reality are connected to the psychic economy of distribution. They could be thus conceptually apprehended via the law of conservation, where the ego sticks to the tried, tested and true formula of reality definition, looking askance at the world; and the law of entropy, which solicits reality for an immediate engagement, with the effect that the system tends towards dispersion, and equally spread out energetics of investment. And whereas Freud does not give us any indication as to the source of such overabundance or depletion of plasticity as the uncontrollable growth or exaggerated wilting, the willingness towards re-design of reality's overall image, should remind us of the conclusion about the inherent artistic flexibility of the ego, where information, possessing a double grammatical structure (the internal and the external) circulates between reality and illusion, being able to find its way back, when things indeed go according to plan. We may with a high degree of confidence conclude that in this particular instance, Freud has something similar in mind.

Such an assessment is possible by exploring the analogy employed in the course of the explication. As we have seen above, the English translation makes a reference to a sculptor, who works either in stone or clay. The equivalent in the original German runs as follows: "*Es ist ein Unterschied, wie ihn der bildende Künstler verspüren mag, ob er in hartem Stein oder in weichem Ton arbeitet*". Now, the reference to a sculptor seems to be indeed an over-adjustment of the text, since the phrase '*bildende Künstler*' means artists in general, and not specifically the sculptor for which the German language has a distinct word '*der Bildhauer*'. The choice of a specific type of artist, as opposed to leaving the text in its anonymous, aggregate reference, which points in the direction of the fine arts ('*die bildende Künste*'), is no doubt dictated by the metaphorical use of 'hard stone' and 'soft clay', thus sharpening the logic, rationality and clarity of the English text, which in German remains much more ambiguous and in need of interpretation. The decision that the English translation takes as to such an interpretation promotes textual exclusivity, leaning in the direction of the passage being simply and purely of metaphorical value, and thus robbing it of any possible theoretical self-worthiness. For whereas '*der Ton*' could indeed be translated as clay or even more specifically potter's clay, its primary meaning (at least as far as what it immediately suggests to us) is sound, tone, note, and even potentially tone of colour. The possibility of such an interpretation still remains, even after we consider the logical, comparative connection that should exist between stone and clay; a grammatical logic, which (speaking purely from the rationality of the attempted comparison) the tone as sound would intensify even more, since clay and tone, relate hermeneutically through the concept of plasticity, which encompasses them both. The signifying power the word still possesses in German, and which we can glimpse schematically as something that concerns malleability, softness, suppleness and flexibility, to which both sound and clay adhere in their materiality, stems from the etymological origin of the word, from the Greek *tonos* (tension, tone) and *teinein* (to stretch). This etymological origin is more significant than merely a historical, linguistic curiosity, for it suggests to us a surface, onto which both of these elements settle, the peculiar surface of the turn of the century and its body, to which the Freudian ego also belongs.

Reconsidering the passage from the standpoint of our most recent discussion, we see that Freud is after a type of artistic alignment and ability absolutely necessary for the ego to be evocative of itself and responsive to analysis. Such artistry lies in the bond or adhesiveness of the plastic element, but one which must also be receptive to structural manipulation; in other words, the end result must be a scaffolding which can support the reconstructive project, while, all along, stabilizing it. This is why, free and unbound plasticity, in the form of a directionless and dispersed tone, will not do here, just as the clumsiness and lack of elasticity of something like a stone, will prove inadequate. The self cast in iron, or liquefied to the point where any attempted influence will have an impact of 'writing in water', is a de-conditioning of the ego, whose parameters are set on its reinforcement, without making it into reinforced, concrete and mute statue (like a stone monument), but rather giving it stabilizing flexibility, like the one of a plant or a musical composition.

In this roundabout way, we have reached the appropriate moment to return to the discussion of the 'I', as it appears in *The Ego and the Id*, specifically its always underestimated, and maybe even under-represented (in Freud's theory) physicality.

The body that has already emerged though our discussion, and the one which is surfacing presently, is the body of *tonality*, not in the strictly musical, technical sense of the word, but rather its connotative power, since the ego, when it is in full possession of its powers, is first and foremost *connotative*. The meaning of tonality in this juxtaposition constitutes a sort of materiality that metaphorically could be designated as 'tonal glue', thus encapsulating both senses that the German '*der Ton*' still articulates, that of the tone and clay as moulding material. It is the *Jahrhundertwende* corporeality, on mutually overlapping levels of art, aesthetics, theory, philosophy, culture and finally the body proper, that merges these two notions, juxtaposing them into the overtone of the world, not only because its environment is uncertain and never fully formed, but especially because via this tenor, the possibility and the desire for a future are condensed in the nameless experience of the moment. This connotative progression and its expectation are enclosed in the 'commotion' of ego's own body:

> Another factor, besides the influence of the system *Pcpt.* [perception], seems to have played a part in bringing about the formation of the ego and its differentiation from the id. A person's own body, and above all its surface, is a place form which both external and internal perceptions may spring. It is *seen* like any other object, but to the *touch* it yields two kinds of sensations, one of which may be equivalent to an internal perception… Pain, too, seems to play a part in the process, and the way in which we gain new knowledge of our organs during painful illnesses is perhaps a model of the way by which in general we arrive at the idea of our body.

> The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself the projection of a surface (SE 19: 25–26).

It almost seems that this last sentence stands in the way of everything that Freud has attempted to emphasize; and for this reason, it is needs to be elaborated upon. Elaboration is a well chosen signifier, since the body, as it appears in Freud's text, refines its materiality into the form of the ego, which proves to be a crucial addition to the overall scheme. Its central role falls back onto the notion of play, since the body is a show-man (*der Schauspieler*), an actor, an agent who looks, shows, observes and is in turn looked at, observed and shown; an operation, which like a surgical procedure, is not only performed on itself, in a sort of auto-dissection via the super-ego, but also accomplished through analysis. This theme also weaves itself into Freud's text under the cloak of an analogy, whose overall communicative value, as we must continually emphasize, is much more consequential and active than a mere linguistic trope; an analogy which compares the work of the analyst to that of a surgeon:

> I cannot advise my colleagues too urgently to model themselves during psycho-analytic treatment on the surgeon, who puts aside all his feelings, even his human sympathy, and concentrates his mental forces on the single aim of performing the operation as skilfully as possible (SE 12: 115).

The technical terminology under whose auspices the body acquires its specific tectonic structure is specifically concerned with a reality-bound kinetics assigned to the underdeveloped concept of sublimation as well as the somewhat convoluted notion of projection. Beginning with the latter notion, there appears an important footnote to the statement about the bodily ego, which is included in the 1927 English translation of the *Ego and the Id*, and apparently authorized by Freud. It expands on the quite cryptic formulation, which, as we have seen above, runs as follows: "The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself the projection of a surface". The footnote further explains that:

> I.e. the ego is ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body. It may thus be regarded as a mental projection of the surface of the body, besides, as we have seen above, representing the superficies of the mental apparatus (SE 19: 26).

Through this short clarification, which does not appear in the German version of the text, we are prone to conclude that the ego is an 'image' (although we should not think here in purely visual terms), a representation of the body, which the latter expels from its own confines. The ego as the projection of a surface, is a plane of the mental apparatus itself, its outer layer, and in this sense it is its organism, its organ, the effigy of the physical body, which is charged with a very similar function – that of holding the entire mass of processes, parts and systems together, in a state of hard won coherence/equilibrium.

Through its outer musculature which is in the position of most direct contact with the world and which, according to Freud, is the most immediate, action-imbued manifestation of the aggressive drive, the body's role is progressive. It performs like the sensitive/resonant connecting membrane through which every perception must pass and leave a mark, in order for it to be registered as energetic trace in the enclosure that the mind and its psychology encompass. The body then is primary, not only in this dynamic/economic sense of the word, but also archaically, from the phylogenetically informed viewpoint, since, before the full development of the intellect and through it, the modern psychic apparatus, it was standing over and against the world, very much on its own.

If a large part of the ego remains under the tension of resistance to things which threaten its always fought-for existence, then the body is also a paradigm and an activity of constant resisting exercises, if only through its mechanical set-up, as a geometrically organized musculature. In fact, the ego cannot exist without the incessant readiness, and in actuality, undisturbed praxis of muscle-flexing. And at one point in his constantly spiralling discussion, Freud lets the two forms, the physical and the psychical merge and infiltrate one another, through yet another analogical construct:

> As a frontier creature, the ego tries to mediate between the world and the id, to make the id *pliable* to the world and, by means of its muscular activity, to make the world fall in with the wishes of the id. In point of fact it behaves like the physician during an analytic practice: it offers itself, with the attention it pays to the real world, as a libidinal object to the id, and aims at attaching the id's libido to itself (SE 19: 56, my emphasis).

To venture out and compare the ego to the analyst, which skilfully and artfully meanders its way through the many potential traps on the way towards a clearance through which it could pass, and surpass itself in a sense by coming out on the other side, finding out (surprisingly!) that it has only come up upon itself, encountered its own image, is to once again reduce things to a common denominator of art and its own type of 'science'. The ego is both scientific and artful. It is its own engineer via analysis, and its own artist, in the way it turns mere hypothesis into a fully functional materiality of a model, a step which science, being by nature much more insecure, rarely takes, if at all. In this sense, it could be argued that the ego is always in a certain sublimated state of anxiety. What prevents it from a case of full-blown neurosis (and this is the crux of the matter) is its ability to remain in the tension of anticipation, of being suspended by wire, descending down a crevice, while knowing and trusting the firmness of the line connecting it to the ledge, up above, the ledge of reality.

It is only art that possesses the methodological know-how, as well as practical experience, which would allow one to remain in the circulatory system of reality-non reality, a system that sublimates because it strokes reality, almost innocently, thus giving the stock of general, culturally shared values and modes of operation, the sheen of non-exchangeable intimacy. This kind of solution might seem to be very inconsequential, banal and ridiculously superficial, but for the ego it means the world. In other words, the aesthetics of refraction is all that the ego ever needs, being caught up, as it is, in the perspective of its own centrality, its own linearity, since it falls so easily into the gutter of a straight line – the line that leads most directly and expediently to its own self, as the immovable anchor through which everything emanates.

It is the concept of sublimation as a special way of projecting that proposes to grasp the way of such refraction. Sublimation in Freud's paradigm, is an underdeveloped notion, without clearly marked borders of its own meaning, as J. Laplanche and J. B. Pontalis, point out in their psychoanalytical dictionary.[73] The interesting aspect of the entire issue of definition, at least from our standpoint, is the ascription of sublimation to the an activity that falls outside of the bounds of sexuality, pure and simple, even though it does not dispense with the energy stemming from the Eros, in general. Sexuality is the central component in psychoanalysis, the constantly fought-over and fought-for area both in the realm of individual psychology and psychoanalytical practice, not simply because Freud is stubborn and intransigent (a description that has been ascribed to his biography anyway) but because there is an existential ground and hence a theoretically indispensable one, for its persistence. Freud needs sexuality, in its most basic genital configuration, not only to bring stability to his system via a non-negotiable, historically 'ordained' (via the Oedipus complex) existential statement, but also to account for a part of reality that is inescapably prevalent and uncompromising, both psychologically as well as culturally:

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[73] J. Laplanche and J. B. Pontalis, *Das Vocabular der Psychoanalyse*.

> The suppression of the pleasure principle by the reality principle, with all the psychical consequences involved, which is here schematically condensed into a single sentence, is not in fact accomplished all at once; nor does it take place simultaneously all along the line. For while this development is going on in the ego-instincts, the sexual instincts become detached from them in a very significant way. The sexual instincts behave auto-erotically at first, they obtain their satisfaction in the subject's own body and therefore do not find themselves in the situation of the reality principle; and when, later on, the process of finding an object begins, it is soon interrupted by the long period of latency, which delays sexual development until puberty. These two factors – auto-eroticism and the latency period – have as their result that the sexual instinct is held up in its psychical development and remains far longer under the dominance of the pleasure principle, from which in many people it is never able to withdraw (SE 12: 222).

The only way that such sexual inscription of the body can be dealt with (apart from a normal sexual development) is a reinvestment of the libidinal energy into areas that are not sexual, properly speaking, a process which, at least at one point, Freud refers to as sublimation.

Freud returns to the concept of sublimation many times over the years, always having in mind a certain replacement value that is achieved through creative/intellectual work and activity, but changing the parameters of how this entire staging of hand-over and cover-up transpires. Nonetheless the issue here, as always, seems to be the continuity of the inescapable trade between primitive/life forces and culture:

> It [the sexual drive] places extraordinarily large amounts of force at the disposal of civilized activity, and it does this in virtue of its especially marked characteristic of being able to displace its aim without materially diminishing in intensity. This capacity to exchange its originally sexual aim for another one, which is no longer sexual but which is psychically related to the first aim, is called the capacity for *sublimation* (SE 9: 187).

We see therefore that sublimation is vaulted over a mere descriptive instance, towards a meditative settlement, which negotiates an agreement between the lower and the higher aims of the organism and its reality, and in this sense it is not only to be understood as parallel to artistic activity, but in fact, should be accorded the place of equivalency with the latter.

The progressive discussion that leads to the tripartite division of the psychic apparatus in the *Ego and the Id*, eventually comes to the reiteration of a topic that Freud had already considered in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, i.e., the two kinds of elementary drives, their relations, blending and potential enervation. A fully formed psychological organism is connected to life and to itself via a play of fusion and de-fusion of the said drives, which as we know, comprise the life affirming instincts of the Eros and the destructive, aggressive instincts of the death-drive. The formative lustration, in the sense of cleaning, purification and surveying of the mixed proportions as far as the two drives are concerned, or in other words, their transformation into a material suitable for external reality, is accomplished by a third type of energy, which Freud designates as a *neutral* way of binding and attaching:

> We have reckoned as though there existed in the mind – whether in the ego or in the id – a displaceable energy, which, neutral in itself, can be added to a qualitatively differentiated erotic or destructive impulse, and augment its total cathexis [*Besetzung*]. Without assuming the existence of a displaceable energy of this kind we can make no headway. The only question is where it comes from, what it belongs to, and what it signifies (SE 19: 44).

Here we should hear the overtones of Freud's discussion about artistic ability, to which he assigns a similar sort of anonymity, displacement and mystery of origin. Neutrality mimics, or more accurately transmits the same lack of placement, lack of commitment and a clear expression of a mandate, thus being free to spontaneously admit to an absorption by any of the clearly committed drives, by creatively and almost whimsically choosing an object or a task as the vehicle for expression. In this sense, Freud, in a latent and never explicitly and firmly established way, postulates a *third drive*, which would be the best characterization of the ego, pure and simple, distilled of the other impulses whose ultimate state of allegiance lies in a foreign territory, and that would mean in turn, that the ego, wearing no borrowed clothing, is an uncommitted designer of its own faith; a plastic form, which in a child-like manner, simply likes to play a game of life, for its own sake, not to mention that it likes to play with itself and by itself, via the communicative skin of basic ground-layer narcissism. At this stage of the entire paradigm, such neutral energy is instructed by the libido:

> It seems a plausible view that this displaceable and neutral energy, which is no doubt active both in the ego and in the id, proceeds from the narcissistic store of the libido – that it is desexualized Eros… If this displaceable energy is desexualized libido, it may also be described as *sublimated* energy; for it would still retain the main purpose of Eros – that of uniting and binding – in so far as it helps towards establishing the unity, or tendency to unity, which is particularly characteristic of the ego. If thought-processes in the wider sense are to be included among these displacements, then the activity of thinking is also supplied from the sublimation of erotic motive forces (SE 19: 44–45).

Thinking, as one of those higher, culturally sanctioned activities, is a store of isolated elasticity, which does indeed come from the libido, since, as Freud does not fail to point out throughout, the sexual instincts are distinguished by their exaggerated plasticity. The important aspect to consider at this particular point is the place of the body, which stands in the midst of action:

> An instinct … is distinguished from a stimulus by the fact that it arises from sources of stimulation within the body, that it operates as a constant force and that the subject cannot avoid it by flight, as is possible with an external stimulus. We can distinguish an instinct's source, object and aim. Its source is a state of excitation in the body, its aim is the removal of that excitation; on its path from its source to its aim the instinct becomes operative psychically. We picture it as a certain quota of energy which presses in a particular direction (SE 22: 96).

It is, perhaps, only now, that we can make some sense of the closing paragraph in Part II of the *Ego and the Id*, which sums up the previously introduced discussion on the 'body-ego':

> If we come back once more to our scale of values, we shall have to say that not only what is lowest but also what is highest in the ego can be unconscious. It is as if we were thus supplied with a proof of what we have just asserted of the conscious ego: that it is first and foremost a body-ego (SE 19: 27).

The lowest things obviously are the deep running networks of drives and impulses, the highest, on the other hand, are those that are closest to the surface of external reality, and which, for this reason, are accorded the highest cultural value, since they are necessary for the self maintaining drive of reality on the edge, suspended between the two classes of instincts. And it is the ego, that through this razor-thin ledge of proscription, creates for itself a space, which will be digestible enough to be consumed, thus satisfying its inherent need for an environment that it can feel at home in, which can be absorptive and accepting of its strange sort of neutrality and non-commitment; its ability to change its mind on the spur of the moment, and seemingly recalibrate the general precepts and preconditions of what, in the end, remains non-negotiable. We will once again refer to this sort of instrumentality as the *artistic/creative drive*, which operates on the premise of a plastic moulding material, a tonal glue whose neutrality gives it an adhesive power to bond itself to any object and its surface, even to itself, as we can surmise form the importance that is accorded to the theory of narcissism in the Freudian paradigm.

We should also not lose sight of the fact that Freud refers explicitly to the unconscious when speaking of the highest and the lowest things. At first glance, this assertion has the potential to contradict Freud's argument for the diminished importance of this realm in the entire set-up of the mind, as well as our argument that Freud's entire psychology is a psychology of the ego, as a certain power towards the creation of new materiality out of the strands of what remains in us, as part of the phylogenetic development of the species (since the id, is first and foremost an archive of archaic structures, and the ego, only a late cultural development, that arises out of its energetic formula). The resolution of this seemingly insurmountable problem, lies precisely in the understanding which is difficult to come by, that both the unconscious and the conscious in psychoanalysis, are not simply abstractions, but progress according to, and are but two poles of a different sort of materiality, an alternate chemical state, to which the best description that can be found, would be the sound-wave, or as we have already elaborated above, the duality of *der Ton* – something that is perhaps not immediately perceptible, but makes itself known via the undeniable presence of real effects. This is how we should comprehend the somewhat cryptic formulation, that the ego is not merely a surface entity (this would give it the sort of materiality that we find in objects, the materiality of a piece of wood, for instance) but a projection of a surface. All the analytical and theoretical strife, the difficulty (Freud's as well as our own) lies precisely in this realm, and our continually frustrated ability to describe it, to compare it with things that are more easily accessible to us, more easily approachable, more familiar. And in the end, we might have to be simply satisfied with the namelessness of its anonymity. Nonetheless, let us try to approximate its 'molecular structure' by reconsidering the concept of projection, in light of what we have just explored in the nature of sublimation. Here, inadvertently, we need to speak of something like projection of sublimation or, in an even more restricted sense, sublimation as projection.

The concept of projection experiences a fate somewhat similar to that of sublimation, with the significant difference that the end result of its state of definition is much more sharply demarcated. For this reason, its short exploration and exposition will prove of a two-fold value to us: (1) as a further specification and elucidation of Freud's explicitly drawn connection between the body and the ego as projection of a surface; and

(2) as a tool of utility that will allow us to shed some more light on the formula of sublimation, which is central to the nature of artistic activity, in general. Of course, as is often the case, these two points of focus are closely related, where one inadvertently touches upon and flows into the other. For this reason, they will be discussed on an equivalent plane, as one mass of an information-saturated layer.

Projection gives us access to its meaning intuitively, as something that protrudes outwards in a sort of reflection or, when distortions are taken into account, refraction. It can be a positive, neutral or negative streaming of energy, which always moves from one space, usually the one of the inner self, towards another, like the external environment. Thus, irrespective of its content, it is first and foremost an indication of directionality, of movement, which displaces something from one enclosure onto a different one. Having taken such broad definition into consideration, the specific meaning of projection is then complicated by its extensive use, not only in an everyday/technical lexicon, but also in the field of neurology, psychology, geometry and most recently, cultural studies. Nonetheless, speaking strictly from within the field of psychoanalysis, projection describes an operation through which the subject ejects the misrecognized and rejected 'objects', qualities, feelings and wishes out of itself, only to localize and find them again in another subject matter, whether a person, a thing, or the environment in general. In this manner, the issue of projection in the Freudian set-up is always something like, a *disowning* projection, or even more accurately a projection which is based on the condition of *disavowal*, in German *Verleugnung*.

Projection[74] operates in various pathological and normal psychological configurations. The concept first acquires significance as a primary defence-mechanism, which is originally introduced during Freud's study of paranoia. The famous case-study of Schreber is based almost in its entirety on the mechanism of projection, although here the concept undergoes further fine-tuning, since now, it is not simply a primary defence but only a phase of it, in the general procedure of symptom-building. Of interest to us, is also the fact that Freud uses the formulation in a cultural setting, to designate the normal socially specific conditions of superstition, mythology, animism etc., which constitute some of the most prevalent components of religious behaviour. We should be right away reminded here of the already established connection to the general theme of a world-view. In an interesting fashion, then, the entire issue of a *Weltanschauung* is a case of projection. Having said all that, the difficulty of grasping the meaning of the concept, lies in its very close similarity to other fundamental psychoanalytic formulations, such as transference or identification. The former is especially crucial to the analytical situation itself, and the patient-doctor relationship. In connection to this situation, Freud uses projection in only one specific instance, i.e. when the analysand ascribes words and thoughts to the analyst, which in actual fact are his own. Nonetheless, as Laplanche and Pontalis point out, projection in psychoanalysis can be assigned two quite specific meanings. The first one of these could be understood in a 'cinematographic' sense, where an image originating in the unconscious is being mapped onto the external reality. It is here that projection takes the shape of a disavowal and displacement of desires, wishes, wants and qualities onto another subject, where what one had denied oneself is once again found and rediscovered. The code according to which this type of projection operates is that of 'not-wanting-to know'. The second meaning is more mechanically instituted, for it is a signification of the actual path of things being 'thrown out' away from the self, which would be closer to an actual loss of a body part, the loss of materiality that one does not want to accept, and then again, its uncovering via a distance of things that are foreign, which stand apart. Here the main operational manifesto is the principle of 'not-wanting-to-be' something, somehow, in some way. The important point to keep in mind, a point which needs to be emphasized, is that there is no simple equivalency between the self and the other in whose constitution the subject is attempting to read his own organics, his own organs, which were dispensed with, and now can be made to speak via a round-about route of amplification and focusing on a foreign territory. Remembering this, projection comes into a more pristine accentuation, as the relationship of otherness and strangeness towards oneself (hence Freud's definition of the famous term *das Unheimliche*, as first of all, an uncanny stance in orientation to things most familiar) and one of intimacy through distance (what Benjamin will describe as the aura)[75] towards the other, since the other here is a recording/storage device, an archive of sorts, on whose surface the subject reads himself. Formulating the matter in such a way, also gives us immediate access to the notion of projection in relation to the ego, moreover the ego as projection of the surface of the body.

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[74] My discussion over the length of this paragraph is based on Laplanche's and Pontalis' abstract of the concept in *The Vocabulary of Psychoanalysis*.

Since Freud understands the physical body as a mass that is shot through and through with the instinctual energy of the drives, its coagulated muscular form must find other outlets, another form of self-expression that would, in its immediacy, be less threatening, aggressive and potentially self-destructive. Hence, after a prolonged cultural development the ego is created as a different space, object, mass, or even more radically a different self, on whose surface the body can find the elements of which it wants to know nothing, as well as configurations that it does not want to be. And since it is dominated in its structural base-condition by the drives, what it does not want to know of and acknowledge is the necessity of delay and even forgoing of immediate satisfaction; in the same vein, what it does not want to be is reality, to experience it in any other way than the muscular and reproductive release, which would lead to a state of immediate equilibrium, i.e., death. The ego then, in its positioning, brings the world to the body; it turns the desire for immediate release into so many ways of decay as a delay tactic that would make the body durable and enduring enough for cultural development. It is here, that we should briefly reconsider and finally connect the two concepts of sublimation and projection.

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[75] The fact that Benjamin bemoans the loss of aura/distance is an indication that the modern subject perhaps lacks adequate psychological underpinnings to deal with his current, technology-saturated circumstances. We will engage in a discussion along these lines, later on in our narrative.

Given the fact, that sublimation is an investment of the libidinal energy into tasks and objects of non-sexual nature, the constitutive difference between sublimation and projection, is precisely that of manifest content and targeting, i.e., the latter makes no qualitative differentiation of the sexual/non-sexual sort, and is moreover very much dominated by the overbearing 'reaction-formation' of a sexual type. This is why, projection could be understood as an infiltration of the ego by the drives, an invasion which creates surface marks and eddies that do not, properly speaking, belong to it, or more accurately, vortexes that are part of the id, which are then used in deference to the ego in handling with the external environment, thus undermining the ego's task of neutralization. Such a neutral ego, which is simply and purely a store of creative, plastic energy, is in itself an abstraction, given the presence of the alien particles which cannot be fully filtered out. But this definition is also the closest description of the ego's elementary nature, its uniqueness and originality, its special responsibility and function. We may also say here, that projection, when the entire problematic is untangled, is more primary culturally, because the body projects its own structural dimension into the world from the start, as can be surmised from the ancient mythology and its anthropomorphism, a fact to which Freud himself draws attention during his elaboration of the concept. Sublimation then is a *special case* of the 'naturally occurring' projective energy, which establishes the mature ego; an energy whose most visible expression is artistic activity. To describe the ego as a projection of the surface of the body, as Freud does, is to speak of projection in both senses, as an extension and at the same time sublimation of the body. The two occur almost simultaneously in varying proportions and mixtures. But it is also an undeniable fact, that sublimation as a more advanced formula of projection, is a more effective and efficient technique of dealing with the world through the body, a technique nonetheless which is also much more fragile, scarce and unstable (given its artistic nature).

But, and this is the monumental point that I have been trying to establish, the ego as such projective, material surface of the body is not simply simulation or pure mimesis, but rather an elaboration of the body's potential to encompass the world that lies beyond the immediacy of it own physicality and its logic, thus moving away tangentially from its tendency to simply impose itself on the world. In this sense, the ego should be approached and apprehended by us as a *creative agent*, which, as it arises, blows horizons out of proportion, creating engagements and outlets for the always overabundant store of energetic impulses.

Using the already established semantics, we should ascribe to the ego the position that a vanishing-point occupies in painterly perspective, as distance at whose outlines the vision of symmetry, of standard and well established procedural activity finds momentary stability, as it just as quickly fails and degenerates, thus opening vistas of different signifying possibilities. In this form, the ego is a formula through which the body disavows or even rejects itself, only to find itself again on a different plane; the plane of instructional accumulation of delay methodologies, creative re-formative 'work-orders' which, taken together, operate according to the logic of *aesthetics of disappearance*, by making the realms further and further separated from the comforting notion of the body, available for interaction and intimacy, thus giving distance the flare of familiarity.

The ego is not only an abstract sign, a mute description, but *an archetypal artist*, whose artistic drive invents new creative ways of the necessary mediation between the whisper of the world and the rigidity, stubbornness of the body. It is a surface that is receptive (given that its creative energy is distinguished by adaptive neutrality) to the *implantation* of foreign elements, which, when re-engineered, open up the world in new ways to the entire, conflict-ridden and self contradictory psychic apparatus.

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In this latest discussion of Freud, I have attempted to create a bridge between what had been said, and what still needs to be discussed. This attempted crossing means to further establish and re-affirm the paradigm of aesthetics and art, as the medium of mass communication in the fin de siècle reality.

The formulations and descriptions that we arrive at by theoretical analysis and elaboration are very often confirmed, almost word for word, in another text from an outlaying area of our immediate concern, before that text had made itself known as a possible evidentiary affidavit. Such is the case with a journal, that has come to my attention, after the fact, or after the above section had been completed, making itself known and carrying the message that I saw only indirectly, in the most pointed way by explicitly proposing some of those things that, in Freud, exist only latently, in disguise.

The publication in question appears for the first time in the year 1890, under the title *Zeitschrift für Psychologie and Physiologie der Sinnesorgane* ('Journal for the Psychology and Physiology of the Sense Organs'). This title, in its own formulation, speaks to almost everything that we have been exploring: it indicates a very unique approach to the human sciences at around the turn of the century, which blends psychology, physiology, biology and philosophy into a volatile mixture, which is charged with the task, or even the tension of supporting an increasingly corroded reality. Our immediate concern falls onto one particular instance; an article, or more accurately a book review written in 1897, by Konrad Lange. In it, Lange proposes to give historical-evolutionary grounding of aesthetics, as he is, at the same time reviewing a book by Karl Gross *Die Spiele der Tiere*, or 'The Play of Animals'.[76] The topic touches directly onto the concept of play, and in this guise it is very much in accord with our earlier discussion of Freud, both in what has been directly expressed in his theory, as well as our entrance onto the scene from a slightly protruding direction.

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[76] The entire title of Lange's piece runs: *Gedanken zu einer Ästhetick auf entwickelungsgeschichtlicher Grundlage. Gleichzeitig als Bericht über Karl Gross, "Die Spiele der Tiere"*. It is found in vol. 14, 1897, pp. 242—273 of the above mentioned journal. Hereafter cited in text.

Lange responds to Gross from the perspective of his own, recently published book *Künstlerische Erziehung der deutschen Jugend* ('The Artistic Education of German Youth'), in which he asserts that play is the underling mechanism, the bedrock on whose foundation, any artistic activity rests. In his own words:

> When in year 1893, I wrote my *Künstlerische Erziehung der deutschen Jugend*, it was of course necessary to discuss the play of children more closely. It is during such discussion, when it became clear to me that play, in a more important way than I have previously thought, is an analogous phenomenon to or a precondition of art (*Gedanken*, p. 242, my translation).

Gross, as we can already surmise from the title of his manuscript, engages with the problem of play in animals, a topic that Lange welcomes not only as a desired addition to the theory of aesthetics and its evolution, but also as an extension, with some modifications, of his own thesis, which he reiterates during the course of his 'review'.

The conclusion is that play and the concept of art, to which Lange refers in the same way I have already proposed in reference to Freud, i.e., as the artistic-drive, are inseparable. In this sense, play at the most primitive level found in animals or its already considerable sophistication in children, and finally its most advanced instance as artistic pursuit, is the necessary component of all reality building; a component that acquires more and more weight as well as significance, the closer we get to the turn of the century. Its existential importance is found in its enabling, productive 'irrigation' of the self, which makes art possible. Such playful possibility or possibility as play is not a matter of leisure or simply pleasure, but in a much more radical manner, it is the essence of the entire artistic gestalt, the moment of its arising out of the struggle for existence. The exact process, the way it is presented by Lange in 1897, three years before Freud publishes the *Interpretation of Dreams*, and some twenty before his fully formulated theory of the drives, employs very similar reasoning:

> It is a fact that the more highly developed individual organism, whose intelligence is already formed to a certain degree, can come through his struggle for existence, without the presence of his innate instincts, or said more accurately, in spite of the fact that these are already, to a certain degree repressed. The higher the development of intelligence, the more can the instincts be dispensed with, and when it is somehow necessary for the species, die out. In the interest of the development of higher intelligence, they will even have to die out, so that through their retreat, a certain amount of room will be made free for the development of intelligence (ibid., p. 261, my translation).

A clear line of logical endowment can be neatly drawn from this text, to the later Freudian paradigm, the specific details, definitional inconsistencies and dynamic proportions, notwithstanding. The important realization is, of course, that Freud does not operate in an intellectual vacuum, that his professional and academic training, ingrained in him certain ready-made hermeneutic recognition marks of the world, interpretive 'hieroglyphs', if we may call them such, that create the base from which he then springs forward, into a world of his own, even though the latter is ever so much more, simply an expression, quite exasperated at times, of what had been ingrained previously. In a word, the logic that underpins the setting cannot be escaped, although it can definitely be displaced, or even disowned, via a projective disavowal which transpires as a new philosophical/theoretical direction.[77]

There is another formulation in Lange's exegesis that connects Freud to a heritage that he, very often, feels in need of disowning or at least mis-acknowledging. Lange refers to it as *Selbsttäuschung* (self-deception) and integrates it into the activity of play, or even in a more stringent formulation, makes self-deception the integral part of play. All play in this scheme is self-deception, a way of building the world through illusion, which should never be confused with something like a hallucination, pure and simple, i.e., as sensory failure, but reaffirmation of the world via the process of abstraction, which, just as is the case with children, can or even has to be, weighted down with tangibility and tactility. Apprehended as such, self-deception, as Lange points out, becomes not only "...the mother of play, but also the mother of art" (*Gedanken*, p. 263).

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[77] For a neatly elaborated line of intellectual allegiances, that moves from Freud's basic education, through the philosophy of Herbart, Helmholtz's psychophysics, to Freud's primary association with his teachers (Brücke and Meynert) as well as early collaborates (Breuer and Fliess) and their saturation with the 19th century physics, psychology, physiology and philosophy, see Ernest Jones, *Sigmund Freud Life and Work*, vol. 1, especially pp. 405–415.

As is the case again and again in the years leading up to the *Jahrhundertwende* and beyond, the project that Lange ultimately sets for himself is very ambitious. It aims at nothing less than firmly establishing the paths along which the modern aesthetic taste develops from the play of animals, through the play of children, and from these to the archaic art and culture of the 'primitive' civilizations, which finally, become the blueprint of the modern, culturally and artistically mature individual. For these reasons Lange proposes a typology which is based on another important coagulation of images that we have already encountered, especially in our discussion of Hermann Bahr – the play of the senses. So that for example, music develops from the acoustical sensual play of the animals, and not only the vocal but also the instrumental music; rhythm in the same connection is derived from the various playful movements of imitation etc., which eventually also, through its illusory ability, leads to the plastic and dramaturgical arts.

Hence our preliminary conclusion: the ego is a method of playful self-deception, and in this stance, it is also a certain neutral plastic material full of potential, whose anxiety comes from the fact that it is also open to expectation, be it from others or from itself, in all the variety of sources. Nonetheless, it is primarily and regularly open to formation and formulation, to moulding, splitting and bringing together again. This inescapable logic makes it into an 'artistic individuality' which looks for its own style of existence, needs it, in order to be a self.[78]

We can perhaps understand better now, how the fin de siècle as it tries to connote its own spatial arrangements, might want to turn everything slightly askew by using what historically had already been 'harvested', in a new combinatory calculus, which amounts to saying, that it uses it own memory, its own ego in continually readjusting the shape of its current perceptions and this again creates a parallel line to the psychoanalytic enterprise professed by Freud. Being thus historically inclined, or memory imbued via the ego, the subject and his body feel as if they are able to *consume* their own space, as opposed to being consumed by it, thus perpetuating the act of fundamental but necessary self-deception. We need only to think here visually, and present ourselves with the vision and the type of space arrangement that arises in Cubism, where the objects look jarred, even 'bloated' and fat, gorging themselves on the space whose line of division between hospitality and hostility traces along their 'undigested' contours (Figure 13, Appendix). It is precisely here, that objects (guitars, violins, anthropomorphic silhouettes in Picasso, for instance) lose their standard logic of unassailable consciousness and integrity; lose their rational identity, to become newly engineered *organs*. The entire Freudian psychic apparatus is an expression of this type of organic engineering, as is Schoenberg's dodecaphonic system. In the case of the former, this is evident through the kind of definition the 'ego' receives, as we have already seen: "The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself the projection of a surface" (SE 19: 26). And the incredible twist is that according to the logic of the *Augenmusik*, such play of surface and space becomes a 'musicology' – the logic of visual sounding.

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[78] As an aside note, we may mention, that our specific identification of the logic of the artistic-drive, which is lodged in the ego, also gives us a rudimentary answer to Freud's puzzling (from the stand point at which we have arrived) inability to propose or venture a speculation, of how it is that some individuals possess artistic talent. Predictably, we may answer: artistic talent, as a logical consequence of the way we have read the Freudian paradigm, as well as the contextual environment in which it is imbedded (hangs suspended), is simply a quantitative function of the always already present and psychically endowed plastic/playful character of the ego. This means, as the popular notion already identifies (although from quite a different personal/cultural motivation), that artists have an ego, i.e., their egos are more powerful in their flexibility and power to reconstitute the world, after it had been pushed to a brink of shattering.

11. *Implantation as Floriculture*

At the beginning of the previous section, I drew distinction between two points, which the analogy and the image of implantation, evocatively creates. These were, to recount briefly: (1) the general sense of the fin de siècle language, which creates a plethora of juxtapositions and comparisons of the human shape and body to, as well as their cultural placement in the imagery of a plant; what I have referred to as the 'agricultural' character; and (2) the process of implantation that infiltrates the body as well as the self and its structures with seeds of dissention and discomfort, since the elements that need to be taken up and processed are very often alien in nature, carrying messages contradictory in their communicative signature.

In the just concluded discussion, through Freud and the psychoanalytic theory, we have tried to explore the latter issue, in the end, being left with a schematic diagram of how the body is implanted with the ego, although such assignment of directionality is not entirely accurate, since the ego, being a formation that stands in a certain but important measure of independence (distance) from everything that keeps encroaching upon it is in turn implanted, even occupied and invested with structures that it was designed to fight against, control, mitigate, if not overcome. We have, of course, already in the process of such exposition touched upon the cultural shade of meaning of this entire programme. It is at this juncture that we will directly engage what figures under argument number one above, not without, of course, rehashing and re-entering the dimension of our recent discussion, and naturally, its further extension in regards to the sharply inclined momentum of our narrative, from its very beginning.

But we start in an already familiar place, an anchorage point of the fin de siècle perspective, since the issue is precisely that of the world and its view. Would it, then, surprise us that this topic is given space and addressed by Arnold Schoenberg in his main theoretical work (*The Theory of Harmony*), written in 1911, in one of the opening paragraphs, dealing simply but quite suggestively with *Komfort als Weltanschauung* ('Comfort as Worldview')?

Schoenberg begins with the observation that, as much as 'our' time is in search of, what it has found, most of all is comfort: "We understand today better than ever how to make life pleasant".[79] This pleasantness and comfortableness is a way of solving problems, especially dispensing with things that one cannot quite grasp, sweeping away coagulations of phenomena that are not that comfort inspiring. In this sense, by dealing in the currency of security which does not mean to 'rock the boat', one inadvertently deals in superficialities, for "...the prerequisite of comfort is: superficiality" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 2). Living the reality of such fundamental apathy as pleasure, it is, in fact, quite easy to have a world-view, since one sees only what is savoury and not the rest, the leftover – what is left after everything else is consumed: "It is thus easy to have a 'Weltanschauung', a 'philosophy', if one contemplates only what is pleasant and gives no heed to the rest" (ibid., p. 2). It is the remainder as the important part of reality one should be responding to, since this is where value is to be found (the type of value Schoenberg will find in the expelled partial harmony of tonality which otherwise operates blindly according to the principle of comfort and pleasantness) because when all is said and done, one cannot exculpate oneself from "[t]he rest – which is just what matters most" (ibid., p. 2). Such rest partiality is something that cannot be standardized, distributed and measured, like pleasure through the metrics of desire or mere agreeable amusement, for instance, can be:

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[79] Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, p. 1. Hereafter cited in text.

> In light of the 'rest' these philosophies may very well seem made to order for those who hold to them, whereas, in that light, the tenets which constitute these philosophies are seen to spring above all from the attempt at self-vindication. For, curiously enough, people of our time who formulate new laws of morality (or, even more to their liking, overthrow old ones) *cannot live with guilt*! Yet comfort does not consider self-discipline; and so guilt is either repudiated or transformed into virtue. Herein, for one who sees through it all, the recognition of guilt expresses itself as guilt (ibid., p. 2).

It is, then, a straightforward conclusion that: "The thinker, who keeps on searching, does the opposite. He shows that there are problems and that they are unsolved" (ibid., p. 2).

Closing off this brief textual overture, which introduces the main argument of the *Theory of Harmony* (in all its technical aspects) Schoenberg cites a couple of examples of such an honest, stand-up attitude towards reality, which brings up the names of "…Strindberg… [who says]: 'Life makes everything ugly. Or Maeterlinck, [who points out]: 'Three quarters of our brothers [are] condemned to misery'. Or Weininger and all the others who have thought earnestly" (ibid., p. 2). The last paragraph takes on the familiar shape, for the times, that of a polemical call: "Comfort as worldview! The least possible commotion, nothing shocking. Those who so love comfort will never seek where there is not definitely something to find" (ibid., p. 2).

Even if the simplicity of the text seems to make the message somewhat trite or even forced, there is no doubt about the fact, that the type of information it is trying to convey, falls in line with the general hermeneutics of the times, which needs to continually respond to the unseen, mysterious, even grotesque and degenerate plane, which underpins reality – the mechanics of its 'bowel movement', since 'truth' in this case, is dirty, unpleasant and unclean, whose outlines are found in the method of decomposition. It is the change of state, chemically speaking, like photosynthesis, which shows something genuine, because it differentiates – and makes and employs difference as a repetitive effect of stabilization and sequencing – a description that can very easily be applied to Schoenberg himself, not only biographically, but especially musically.

The time of which we are the intellectual descendents, when modernity supposedly 'happened', is still a nascent period when things must be expressed organically, because language has not, as yet, caught up with reality in its descriptive power of organization and conveyance of meaning – a condition that, in the end, makes it all the more real since it must involve the body at play. And this is perhaps why, as we will see, the only linguistic/grammatical expression accorded to this type of reality, is a profound and unmitigated crisis of the word – its namelessness and loss of language (*Sprachlosigkeit*); a loss which can only be expressed in the psychometrics of resonance and the kind of vision that it inspires.

The physiognomy of the self, caught up in the semiology of the times, implicated in the mushiness of a new biology, for whose purposes simple, disinvested vision, is not enough, because it must now also involve the ear which opens one's mouth, is perhaps most easily surmised in the brief moment of *Jugendstil*, especially its ornamental imagery.[80] It is here, where we can grasp in a very accessible form, the hybrid humanoid shapes, which crisscross between stems, leaves, roots and flowers, and the simplicity of the human body, in its stark nakedness, brushed into graphic formulas that, in their flow, motion towards, what this text has already attempted to subdue in the name of plant/floral psychology – the psychology of implantation and floriculture, because it plans, plants and implants, all along circumscribing the field of this activity, as a sort of plantation of new sensuality. There are many visual examples along these lines that can be 'quoted' – some of them are reproduced here, in the adjacent pages (Figures 14&15, Appendix).

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[80] The discourse of voicing and prying the mouth open was also extended to Freud, who, through the play on his first name, was consistently referred to by the Viennese press as 'Sieg-mund' Freud (the victorious-mouth). For many instances of this, see Marina Tichy and Sylvia Zwettler-Otte, *Rezeption Sigmund Freuds und der Psychoanalyse in Österreich 1895–1938*. One example of the original press article, using this formulation, is found on page 114, among numerous others.

The somewhat inauspicious beginnings of the movement are described dynamically, in a rhizome-like image; the *Jugendstil* ornament being almost a parasitic invention, which takes over spaces in a manner of ivy appropriating the space of a stone wall:

> It is of utmost importance, that the beginning of *Jugendstil* is built up through the ornament… But what type of an ornament? In book design it first emerges in vignettes, head and border-edges, initials. Soon it expands, incorporates picture motifs into itself, pulls and presses the letters, transforming the type, grows over the walls, wallpaper, carpets, posters, windows, captures furniture, baseboards, shortly even the street pavement. Such ornament knows almost nothing of the abstract repetition of the same, which up until then, served as the accepted, never broken principle of all ornamentation. Not one time, an edge or a frame, uses exactly the same elements as another one; some kind of variation always takes place.[81]

Repetition of difference, in short, seeding and unseeding, infinity of the line, and through it, creation of a new existential force in its relentless drive – all the elements, that at one point, will constitute the definitional instrumentality of Freud's and Schoenberg's mature output. The important thing to realize, is that it is the frame itself, the edges of constantly shifting borders, and not the 'meaty' contents, that serve as the principle of construction, because: "It is the drive to frame everything that is more important… Picture and frame … the actual, framed paintings – begin, in fact, to mix one with the other" (Sternberger, *Jugendstil*, p. 30). And even if the contents still preserve some hard won independence, they do not simply fill-out the picture, but rather are co-opted into the momentum of this 'en-framing' construction, with the result that: "Everything is mixed through, mixed together, water with plants, plants with swans or snake-bodies, and these with human appendages…" (ibid., p. 30).

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[81] The discussion in the next few pages is based on a very informative article written by Dolf Sternberger, which first appeared in 1934 in *Die Neue Rundschau* 2, pp. 255–271 under the title *Jugendstil – Begriff und Physiognomik*. It is also found in a collection of essays *Jugendstil*, ed. Jost Hermand, pp. 28–29. Hereafter cited in text.

The effect is more than a purely aesthetic one, or thematic, as the logical expression of a certain artistic technique taken to the limit (or as far as its own functionality will allow it to go), because the emerging point of contact between the force of abstractness and reality, is much more grave and serious – it presents itself as a between-zone or the in-between realm, where the human and the grotesquely romantic meet surface to surface, if not face to face, exploding in a curious mythology as signification: "…this strange between-realm of plant-like, lower animals of the see bottom" (ibid., p. 31).

Jugendstil means to portray nothing less and nothing more, than simply the kinetics of such unprecedented 'organism', its genetic structure, pre-figuring in its twisted, weaved lines, and the kind of distribution of elements these effectuate, what since then we have identified and re-inscribed into the structure of the human body itself as the DNA code. But before this could have taken place, before science could catch up with a new representational vocabulary, which at one point simply becomes a latent part of our existential lexicon, there was a need to search for 'man' outside of the human (already launched by Nietzsche in such a spectacular fashion); an investigative logic, which also underlies Schoenberg's fundamental necessity to search for sound outside of the musical, or Freud's compulsion to search for human psychology outside of the 'I', and then inadvertently return to it. The mechanics of this outbound search cannot help but to weaken and blur the dimensions of the body, whether it is the human body, or the body of received traditions. And as we have already remarked during our discussion of projection, the ego is also almost immediately a weakening of the body, of whose surface it is itself a refraction. This is why, *Jugendstil* receives and works with such "...poverty of corporeality – more a notion, the feeling of a presentiment, than an exact reproduction..." (ibid., p. 31). Now, as the vehicle for this premonition or notion, *Jugendstil* invents the ornament which is charged with the responsibility for the message, a responsibility which, in the end, it cannot withstand, as is exemplified by its relatively short-lived duration, and the type of 'gut-wrenching' opposition that it is soon to receive, like the one from Loos, for instance. This kind of negative reaction is not merely polemical. Rather, it exposes the fundamental flaw in its seemingly pristine surface.

The flaw is precisely that of a surface, enclosed in the fact that certain deep-running and burrowing forces are exculpated from their murkiness and darkness and stretched, harmonized and organized, in the confines of the top layer of reality, which cannot support their exposed roots. This will eventually lead to the re-investment of depth with the burden-bearing focus, which of necessity, will have to preserve the blind spot of its expanse intact, just like, in the end, psychoanalysis is forced to do. Nonetheless, *Jugendstil* does identify the elementary 'organicism' of the fin de siècle complex, radicalizing the network of its connections, responses and investments, by visualizing their abstractness, and thus giving them the reality of a mundane life, which is simply and deceptively ornamental:

> ...all the shapes merge into each other, all becomes a mass of feeling, driven by the soul and moved 'organically'. The total, in this way *lived* ornamental world of *Jugendstil* is a type of materialization of the "hazy mist of the soul", as Maeterlinck says. It is exactly here where the uniqueness of *Jugendstil* lies, which separates it from all the earlier epochs and meanings of ornamentation. The abstract figures themselves, the simplest graphic elements, according to the Jugendstil theory, are always subordinated to feelings or 'experiences', in fact *inhabited*... [This is why], it is not the ornament that 'expressed' the soul-life of this strange time, but men themselves led the life of the ornament, the souls themselves became ornaments (ibid., p. 32, my translation and emphasis).

The direction of the movement "…turns itself not towards the outside, but rather inside" (ibid., p. 33) – nature and the order of things, being drawn into the ornament, literally and existentially. It emerges in full force, through the total architectural design of the outer shell of the building, as well as the inner living quarters, which are organically condensed into an elaborated expression of a new center as *Heim*, or:

> More exactly, the family house. The home as a total thoroughly shaped realm of individual life, in which the synthesis of art in harmony of inner and outer, of decoration, furniture, lighting, and all the other particularities, prove their worth. One can understand this idea of total home-art [*Heimkunst*], or "space art" [*Raumkunst*] – the word around that time, came from Vienna – as one universal expansion of the ornament (ibid., p. 37, my translation).

Of course, the attempted incorporation of the strange and the foreign into the space of domesticity is a contradiction in terms. When it is nonetheless carried out, the only result that one can be certain of is the uncanny feeling of the *unheimlich*, which as we already know, is defined by Freud as a strangely 'frayed' relationship of distance and unfamiliarity that one feels, precisely in the most intimate (relationally speaking) and known surroundings.

It seems to be the case, then, that in spite of this ability that *Jugendstil* shows to re-combine and re-calibrate elementary forces that previously remained in the state of narcoleptic slumber, even though it exposes the masquerade of the officially sanctioned existential style (whether in art, or the everyday), it creates for itself another corpuscle, another shell in which it dresses itself, which eventually will have to again cover what it means to expose in a crust of all too cosy comfort, thus silencing the voice it means to liberate:

> For indeed, the masquerade of the historical style was thrown-off, but only to be exchanged for the clothing of the new style, which now seemed to be tailored to the living body of the Zeitgeist, like second skin… It was the idea of Jugendstil to surround men, in fact the entire epoch, *in noisy reflections of their own insides*, to wrap them up in

> these moulds. Narcissus died because he had lost himself in his own image (ibid., p. 36, my translation and emphasis).

The problem becomes precisely that of vision, which as we have already experienced through Hermann Bahr, is impotent to formulate experience. Vision is not enough, because 'man' as the fin-de-siècle individuality, must also listen, and *Jugendstil*, in the end, retreats into dispensation of numbness and silence, since it becomes too comfortable with itself and the world, and even moves totally into the realm of comfort as feeling at home (best exemplified in the fact that it tries to take full control over the structure and set-up of the living quarters). It is thus only a natural extension of its method, that it should eventually buckle and fall into Expressionism, which stretches its horizontality, vertically, thus once again accentuating the three-dimensionality of experience – a vertical line of reasoning, which will also become characteristic of Schoenberg's technique, or maybe more accurately, will be brought into existence as its most pressing and 'visible' effect.

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If there is one aspect of this entire aesthetics of renewal we should not lose sight of, it is the one of asymmetry. The asymptotic nature of the factual, which creates the undertow of conflict becomes the persona of the times, its mask, which, as the etymologically more sensitive reading of the word already implies, actually reveals, instead of hiding (persona=mask). The instability that goes hand in hand with asymmetry is a new motion and movement which, in the very nature of its *gestus*, has no other option but to become an aesthetic expression; an expression which, when its kinetic mechanics are calibrated correctly, creates the unforeseen functionality of self-preservation.

Fin de siècle seems to have taken the structure of the impending disaster and then a recovery from being at the brink, to yet another, almost scientific level, since it is in the 'business' of its experimental perpetuation, which also creates the requirement of perpetually finding the right solution – a new point of balance, which very often, perhaps even predominantly, cannot arrive at a mechanical formulation. Given no other choice, it must scream in the shrill voice, perhaps only calling out for such mechanics of salvation, when not, actually, voicing its inadequacy or impossibility from the start. This is how functionality and aesthetics, the predominant paradigm of the *Jahrhundertwende*, meet at the bio-physical intersection of the body, which itself becomes both paradigmatic and symptomatic, whose defining feature must arise *en masse*, in the knotted viscosity of another degree of malleability, since it is hopelessly implicated in structures which its natural muscular endowment cannot support and control. This is also how the body (and I am always using the body in both literal and representational/euphemistic sense) must come out of itself by acquiring a shape, whose outlines are not immediately accessible as something already in store, in reserve, in its 'dramaturgical' gesticulation repertoire. In other words, what must happen is a process of transition, or even more radically, metamorphosis to another state, but importantly, a state that can also achieve a certain level of stability (i.e., be able to exist) in a reality whose first-order expression, naturally tends towards denial.

A similar assessment of *Jugendstil*, proposed by Dolf Sternberger, follows the line of our argumentation:

> This is why, the so enchanted man, with a transformed face, becomes in his being, an organic, vegetative *soul*. The immediate body of bones, flesh, muscles, skin, nails and hair came to the point of disappearance, was dissolved in this driven seeing, and swallowed in this overall growth – "The body was nowhere to be found"… If the body, whose meaning as the soul's image, is not always a plant, it is surely each time, already

> something that transforms itself into one, because, turned around, the plants also are felt as animated [*be-seelt*], not only that, but also felt immediately as having a soul [*seelenhaft*] (Sternberger, *Jugendstil*, pp. 42–43, my translation).

All this leads men "…into conscious-less and the unconscious, the mere meaning of life, robbed of language, that roots him to one place, thus making him plant-like" (ibid., p. 43).

If the picture, painted in such a radical way, seems to be much too exaggerated for us, it is because, modern scholarship (due to the simple time factor), tends to approach that time period through the overly strict objectivity of art and its historically specific style, thus divesting the phenomenon it intends to investigate of its living quality and the force of the overall project. Style is not an empty research indicator, but a socio-cultural phenomenon, whose footprints are to be examined in line with its specific purpose and utility, which around the turn of the century, is especially charged with agency. Surely, what 'happened' then, was a stylistic manipulation, but it was also an unprecedented expression of its overall signature, which crossed the dividing line between representation of reality, and a reality which itself becomes representative.

Art as an isolated and isolating creative activity is much too confined and obdurate a concept to be able to capture adequately the upheaval of the fin-de siècle life. And whereas, there surely remain, what we would today describe simply *objects d'art* as memory of that time gone by, and even though we cannot help ourselves to take them as isolated particularities which, in themselves, are somehow a monument to their own existence (in the simplicity of what they might 'mean'), we must also constantly remind ourselves that the activity of their creation, was never purely or simply an artistic project. Art is, of course, always expressive, maybe even expressive of something, but it is not always powerful enough to become the language of a reality which all of a sudden starts to mimic and imitate its mundane 'elevation' according to differently structured code of signification. We should know and recognize this principle well by now, since it does not even has to be artistically-imbued – the principle of a mass medium which structures perception, hammers in little rivets of definitional formulations which infect every corner of known space, since that space cannot seem otherwise, than according to the message these information-molecules carry along their trajectories.

The fin de siècle concept of art, its general aesthetics, should be taken as such a mass medium. That means, it should be understood on a much larger and much more immense scale, than simply an artistic movement, which expresses decadence, dissatisfaction, creativity, etc. Because, in its motion, the type I have been continually attempting to expose, it must be elevated to the principle of a new semiotic code, which establishes the fundamental markings according to which our modernity orients itself, in its, now, technological and communicative prowess. This is why, when Sternberger, already in 1934, accuses *Jugendstil* in its enchantment, of imprisonment and condemnation[82] his accusation is both accurate and misguided. Accurate in its identification of the totalizing principle of perception always lurking in the wings, after all the 'fun and games' are actually seen through, but also misguided, because the attempt to re-inscribe reality and re-discover its outlines; the valiant try, in short, to bring art into reality, making the latter, if not nobler or more stoic, then certainly more passionate on this most enervating, everyday level, is an attempt that cannot take place in any other way, than a forceful implantation of the message, for better or worse.

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[82] "Tragically the enchantment closed their [men's] eyes. What seemed like a solution to them was incarceration and condemnation" (Sternberger, *Jugendstil*, p. 45).

The final accusation levelled against *Jugendstil* by Sternberger from his vantage point of already a significant removal, concerns what is really at stake, in both the turn of the century discourse and our theoretical elaboration of its silhouette – the crisis of sound, or rather its physical and polemical necessity as well as the anxiety about its potential lack. By his estimation, *Jugendstil*, which, in the final analysis multiplies itself in a checker-board pattern of silences, launches its own surface to a condition where "…muteness transforms itself into the mask of a cry" (ibid., p. 46). *Jugendstil* fails to fulfill and attain the most basic principle of approach that all turn of the century phenomena tend to gravitate towards – that of sonority which, in its call, allows one to pay attention, and more radically, to see what otherwise is inaccessible. Sternberger uses the image of the mask, in its most negative sense, as something that distorts, hides and represses without a trace. But such polemical, semantic inflection, goes against the grain of not only our previous discussion, but also and more significantly (in final assessment) against the materiality and the spirit of *Jugendstil* itself, even if the latter is a failed attempt at making reality resound in its own image.

12. A Mask That Cries: Psychology of Distances

The genealogy of 'masking' or 'cover-up', leads back to the 19th century architectural theory. Most interesting for us (since we are continually dealing with ways of construction and re-construction) are some well established architectural principles, like the one introduced, for instance, by Gottfried Semper who in many estimations, figures as one of the most important intellectual personalities leading up to the *Jahrhundertwende*.[83] More specifically, the principle that I am referring to is what becomes known as *Bekleidung*, or 'dressing', which is to be applied to the raw materiality of a building in a form-giving exercise, and thus an activity, which will create art, out of the simple, engineered skeleton of an architectural structure. Semper thus creates a method of clothing, which gives to the material qualities it does not posses on its own, although simple hodgepodge application of mascara is not what he has in mind:

> Masking does not help, however, when *behind* the mask the thing is false or the mask is no good. In order that the material, the indispensable (in the usual sense of the expression) be completely denied in the artistic creation, its complete mastery is the imperative precondition. Only by complete technical perfection, by judicious and proper treatment of the material according to its properties, and by taking these properties into consideration while creating form can the material be forgotten, can the artistic creation be raised to a high work of art.[84]

There is, then, a correct application of the mask, which, not unlike its use in the classical system of the Greek theatre, accentuates and brings-forth the already extant intensity of the actor's character, making the psychological purity of his make-up, more pronounced, thus letting one forget about the actor's own physical dimensions, which are not only a limitation, but also a challenge to the dramaturgical reality he is trying to portray.

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[83] Alois Riegl, as we have already seen is engaged in a dialogue with Semper throughout his *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, often paying homage to one of the greatest theorists and architects of the 19th century, but also consistently moving beyond Semper's definition of art's origin in technique and the functionality of practical circumstances. Gottfried Semper (1803–1879) is not only known for his major and very influential work *Der Stil* (Style). He is also recognized for his buildings, of course. In the context of Vienna, the most visible mark left by Semper on its cityscape, are the two mirror Neorenaissance buildings, facing each other across the Maria Theresa Square – *Kunsthistorisches Museum* and *Naturhistorisches Museum*, as well as the *Burgtheater*, facing the City Hall across the Ring.

[84] Gottfried Semper, "Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten, oder praktische Ästhetic", in Ákos Moravánszky, *Aesthetics of the Mask*, p. 205. My discussion on pages 156–158 is based on Moravánszky's, and the original sources referenced in that article.

Semper's influence on an entire generation of architects is well known and documented. Its most distinct shape takes form in the quite pronounced identity crisis, which suspends architecture between the problem of engineering, pure and simple, and art, or termed slightly differently, between idealism and realism; a crisis that is perhaps best exemplified in the linguistic nomenclature that architecture feels necessary to create for itself (like a new piece of clothing), since around the turn of the century, it starts referring to itself as *Baukunst* – the art of building. Such new linguistic control of architecture's own reality, emerges as a culmination point, whose visual apex goes back to the previous century, as has already been indicated, and not only to Semper, but someone like Heinrich Leibnitz, who already in 1849, proposes to apprehend the structural element in architecture and its relation to the art-form, in the following manner:

> We understand *architecture* to be that building activity capable of impressing the task of spiritual and moral (ethical) meaning on works arising out of naked need and mechanically assembled, therefore elevating a materially necessary form to an *art-from*… It is true that form is determined by mechanical theory and structural laws, similar to how the parts of a machine perfectly fulfill the function for which they are created, but form will forever remain rigidly constrained as long as it lacks the exterior habit, the characteristic that can elevate this *mechanism* to a living *organism* that can speak and signify its inner essence. This moment will occur only when the visual *art-form* places a transparent mask over this mechanical *core-form*… This characterizing element will be the creation of form or the *ornament* of architecture. Its purpose resides not in the building's structural functioning but, on the contrary, will articulate only symbolically the function of the core-form, precisely displaying all of its relations, and in this way endowing the work with that independent life and that ethical sanction through which it alone can be elevated to the work of art.[85]

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[85] Heinrich Leibnitz, "Das struktive Element in der Architektur und sein Verhältnis zur Kunstform: Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Geschichte der Baukunst", quoted in *The Aesthetics of the Mask*, p. 208.

It should be immediately apparent, that the kind of language used here, especially the coupling of mechanism-organism, pre-figures what has already emerged through our discussion, as the elementary and ubiquitous symbolic-dictionary of the fin de siècle.

In fact, as Moravanszky further points out, the image of the human body, was a widely used metaphor by the turn of the century architectural establishment.[86] One of many examples is Joseph August Lux, the author of the first extended monograph on Otto Wagner (arguably the most prominent and representative figure of Viennese modernism in applied arts and architecture) who in 1910, writes:

> It is simply untrue that the bare skeleton is the final word in beauty. A railway bridge, an Eiffel Tower, and similar works of engineering are simply skeletons. They can please my intellect, but they can never please my heart. The artistic eye sees with the heart and not with the intellect. Permit me a metaphor: the human skeleton is surely the most perfect work of engineering. But it is rosy flesh that is essential to my eye in seeking beauty, from which it follows that we are dealing not only with the public but also with the professional, who will not fulfill culture's desire for beauty with construction, material, and function alone … artistic form must be rediscovered in the new elements.[87]

The search for these *new elements* is a characteristic not only of the architectural desire, or desire for an architecture, but as we are continually learning, the entire epoch. It is brilliantly displayed by someone like Otto Wager (Figure 16, Appendix), whose carried-out projects as well as his design sketches, are impelled forward by this wave of a searched-for center, a shore onto which one can, finally, be washed up.

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[86] "Architects sought assistance from the analogy of the human body: just as the body follows the form of skeletal construction, so architecture should reveal its inner truth…The metaphor of skeleton and flesh appears in numerous writings on truth in architecture of the time – from Fritz Höber to Hendrik Petrus Berlage. The latter wrote in his study of 1905, *Gedanken über Stil in der Baukunst* ("Thoughts on style in architecture"), 'With every creation of nature the dressing is, to a certain extent, an exact mirroring of the skeleton…in which the logical principle of construction predominates; the dressing does not slip over it like a suit, like a loose veil that completely negates this construction, bur rather merges fully with the inner structure. In the final analysis it is embellished construction, as it were, trying to reclaim the body" (*The Aesthetics of the Mask*, p. 207).

[87] Joseph August Lux, "Ingenieur-Ästhetic", quoted in the *Aesthetics of the Mask*, p. 207

In his *Moderne Architektur* (1902)[88] Wagner identifies the two main architectural trends of the time (the symbolic one, stemming from Semper, and the purely constructivist initiated by the encroachment of engineering on the traditional abode of architecture) as the two fencing camps of realism and idealism, those "hermaphrodites of art and vampires of practice" (Wagner, *Modern Architecture*, p. 63). In opposition to those 'two species' of designers and theoreticians, who would have him fall on occasion into the one or the other camp, Wagner attempts to construct a type of ***responsive materialism***, as a conduit or a circuit of transference (*Übertragung*, if we are to speak in psychoanalytic terminology again) that would be the most immediate and best expression of the modern times, and the life of individuals enclosed in its 'iron cage'. This type of performance is deposited into two forms of engagement: the one being the expanse of the modern city, elaborated in Wagner's theory of the *Großstadt* with its constantly extending borders and its clear lines, large, spacious vistas, cleanliness, hygiene and harmony. Wagner comes closest to the actualization of its ideology, in his design of the Viennese inner-city railway system (*Wiener Stadtbahn*), or the network of water regulation canals, which meander through the city like a vascular system, clearly circumscribing its dimensions and thus giving life to the space inside their circumference. The other of the two planes is concentrated in the monumentality of individual structures, which as Fritz Neumeyer points out, operates according to the notion of a 'body at work',[89] whose impressionistic concept of a 'monumental appearance', means to create an image that would not mask, but present and actualize the forces and tensions that support and at the same time, in their exerted pressure, threaten to rip a structure apart

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[88] Otto Wagner, *Modern Architecture*, hereafter cited in text.

[89] Fritz Neumeyer "Iron and Stone: 'The Architecture of the *Großstadt*" in *Otto Wagner*, pp. 115–153.

(Figure 17, Appendix). It is this type of manoeuvring that intercedes, implanting life into art (and vice versa), and not simply confining itself to a professional expression of a certain ideology that tries to mediate between the individuality of a monad and its social enclosure.

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Inadvertently we are speaking here of a *social aesthetics*, a problem of modern life approached in those terms already in 1896 by one of the most vibrant and underappreciated figures in contemporary sociological theory, Georg Simmel, who presents a still enduring image of modern city-life as:

> An inner barrier … between people, a barrier, however, that is indispensable for the modern form of life. For the jostling crowdedness and the motley disorder of metropolitan communication would simply be unbearable without such psychological distance. Since contemporary urban culture … forces us to be physically close to an enormous number of people, sensitive and nervous modern people would sink completely into despair if the objectification of social relationships did not bring with it an inner boundary and reserve.[90]

It is interesting to note that Simmel builds his sociology on the concept of aesthetics, as the mitigating and expressive formation, which arises with and forges the character of a certain type of society. In doing so, he is clearly indebted to Riegl, since the two main historical/cultural identities that Simmel sees in the perpetual historical recurrence and fluctuation are symmetry and asymmetry, whose structures interchangeably come to the forefront as the expressive power of a culture, in varying proportions, depending on the cultural moment and the degree to which the social organizational powers had established their hold. Along this line of reasoning, all societies that are oversaturated with rationality and neatness of divisions that symmetry brings with it, will naturally tend towards the other pole of self-exploration as disorganization. The opposite is true when a civilization reaches a specific critical mass of liberalization, via the entropy of the individualizing forces in it, which then must be brought together again under the centralizing authority that decrees a new form of universal interaction:

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[90] Simmel, "Sociological Aesthetics", quoted in Frisby, ed., *Fragments of Modernity*, p. 73.

> The origin of all aesthetic themes is found in symmetry. Before man can bring an idea, meaning, harmony into things, he must first form them symmetrically. The various parts of the whole must be balanced against one another, and arranged evenly around a center. In this fashion *man's form-giving power*, in contrast to the contingent and confused character of mere nature, becomes most quickly, visibly, and immediately clear. Thus, the first aesthetic step leads beyond a mere acceptance of the meaninglessness of things to a will to transform them symmetrically. As aesthetic values are refined and deepened, however, man returns to the irregular and asymmetrical. It is in symmetrical formations that rationalism first emerges. So long as life is still instinctive, affective and irrational, *aesthetic redemption* from it takes on such a rationalistic form. Once intelligence, reckoning, balance have penetrated it, the aesthetic need once again changes into its opposite, seeking the irrational and its external form, the asymmetrical.[91]

We have already seen that in Riegl, these two enduring coagulations of the cultural will towards a self-perpetuating imprint, are conceptualized under the long-running dichotomy of 'harmonization' (symmetry) and 'organization/organism' (asymmetry). The question for Simmel is precisely that of proportions between the individualizing and the socializing forces, between the monad of the self and the aggregate of the space that the self is resigned to share, under the value of a mass as one predominant signification. The dualism of individual versus society is the latest, modern expression of this long-standing dynamic, which in the most general sense, can be described as the distance-closeness interchange:

> Every epoch of human history seems to derive its unlimited number of manifestations from this dualism between movements of thought and life, in which the basic streams of humanity find their most simple expression… [The] present has found for this dualism

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[91] Simmel, "Sociological Aesthetics", quoted in Etzkorn, ed., *Georg Simmel – The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays*, pp. 68–80. Hereafter quoted in text.

> the formulae of social versus individual, which draws its line through mankind and even through the individual man (Simmel, *Sociological Aesthetics*, p. 68–69).

If, as Simmel points out, the origin of aesthetics is found in symmetry, in the many signatures of its neat divisions and distributions (what Riegl addresses as the crystalline quality) then the question is: how close does this form of redemption operate to life itself? – provided that we remind ourselves that Simmel identifies form and the activity of form-giving as the basic precept of cultural production. How true is it to its potential? How far might it be removed from it? And is it redemption of life or through life?

Simmel does identify *life* in its purity and nakedness as the centre according to which the modern figuration of 'man' is defined and defines itself.[92] It is through these sorts of questions that not only Simmel, but the entire fin de siècle paradigm makes itself heard, because distances are now inscribed into the modern senses and their sensitivity as a psychology (as opposed to being simply transcendental principles) and that means life and the modern individual continually out-pace each other.

Being thus entrapped in always 'looking awry', the only mitigating circumstance that life can find in the process of its constant and unceasing self-examination is the possibility for a new set of values, which will be able to take into account and acknowledge the delirious nature of formlessness, i.e., of life stripped naked, to the bare minimum of apprehension. This new kind of value which gives 'man' at least a semblance of functionality, without necessarily emphasizing the form under whose principle it operates, or even more radically, a form that operates under the decree of plasticity, pure and simple (which also means that it provides the option of quick condensation and dissipation of form, what we have already examined under the logistics of floriculture) is nothing less than *aesthetic value*:

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[92] In *Conflict in Modern Culture* (in Etzkorn, ed., pp. 11–26) after proposing a sequence and historical march of world-views based on divergent organizing principles (for instance, 'being' in Greek classicism, God in the Middle Ages or nature in the Renaissance) Simmel advances the view that modernity, at around the turn of the century takes the shape of a general identification with *life*, with its own instrumentality, which also produces the consequence of rebellion against and denial of form as such; as the principle of engagement with reality – a contradiction in-terms without a final resolution, since life, especially life as culture, cannot exist without some kind of enclosing confines, i.e., form. This is the kind of internal contradiction as rebellion against form and then (possibly) its even more powerful accentuation that Schoenberg epitomizes, as we will see.

> Our sensations are tied to differences, those of value no less than the sensations of touch or temperature... It is not only this conditioning of all our sensations by differences, which we may conceive of as undesirable restraints and shortcomings of our being, that ties the values of things to their relative distances from one another: these very distances, too, represent bases of aesthetic value (ibid., p. 70).

The value inscribed in aesthetics, which is now present in its flayed, skinned shape, because that is the demand of modernity, is an *intervallic* quantity, a value that finds itself and the world in distance, in removal, in elaboration, intimation and anonymity that distance offers, but also potentially in firm corpus of callousness that any removal has the ability to instantly flip into, like a suit of armour that now must cover its nakedness, with the stylistics of nudity.

The point is, however, that aesthetics has always been and still is, according to Simmel, the basic procedure of how phenomena arise and organize themselves, as well as how we behave in relation to their cultural swarms. It cannot be otherwise, since aesthetics is from the start relational. It is a way for human culture to build connections, or said simply, it is the basic building block of the world in which we find ourselves, and in this sense, it is something that lies beyond the freedom of choice. And the question that immediately arises, the one we have already asked in some of its modulations, is the one of intimacy and genuineness, or *closeness*. In trying to provide an explanation, Simmel falls into the domain of art, its name and law, given that all culture, just like the isolated momentousness of artistic activity proper, is artful because it is a praxis of perceptive manipulations:

> The intrinsic significance of artistic styles can be interpreted as a result of different distance which they produce between us and phenomena. All art forms change the field of vision by which we originally and naturally react to reality. On the one hand, art brings us closer to reality, bringing us into a more immediate relationship with its proper and innermost meaning by revealing to us behind the cold strangeness of the world the animated quality of being (*Sein*) through which it becomes familiar and intelligible for us. On the other hand, every artistic medium introduces abstractions from the immediacy of material things. It weakens concrete stimuli and introduces a veil between them and us, analogous to the blue hue which surrounds distant mountains. Equally strong stimuli are connected with both ends of this antithesis. Tensions and different emphases between them express in each style its unique form (ibid., p. 77).

The blue hue of the mountains suggests an image of another famous exploration of distance, and as a matter of fact, its unrecoverable loss – I am of course referring here to Walter Benjamin and the concept of aura, with whom we will engage shortly. But let us still try to unravel Simmel's stance towards distance, since what Benjamin bemoans in its absence just a few decades later, is still present at the turn of the century, or at least its necessity is still being felt.

Distance in Simmel's conceptual network is first of all a heuristic device, and then, what it means to capture, the rudimentary procedure of modernity given the special demands, requirements and configuration that it imposes, are not without deleterious consequences. We should also not overlook the fact, that ultimately Simmel's and Benjamin's definition of distance (although both of them are after the same thing, i.e., intimacy of life) are divergent, the former operating under the auspices of consonance (as can be clearly surmised from the above passage, since for Simmel the 'blue hue of the mountains' is that which removes evenly) and the latter under the power of dissonance, of feeling the roughness and friction that clearly demarcated, sharply distinguished moments of differentiation, bring with it. As is the case then, Simmel and Benjamin operate at two ends of the same spectrum. It is the passage of time, the four or so decades that divide them (Simmel writes *Sociological Aesthetics* in 1896, Benjamin publishes *The*

Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction in 1936) their own sort of strange but unavoidable distancing, that resolves historically what in-between these two durational markers, Schoenberg attempts to combine in his own sort of way, through sound that surfs the wave of re-inscribed distantiations, which bring closer without revealing much in the way of form – a discussion that this narrative has taken care to foreshadow, incrementally, immersed in the context that surrounds its mere artistic outburst.

Simmel seems to take distance, and the inference of closeness as well as removal, in the most rudimentary sort of way, as the driven enhancement or shrinkage of geometrical vectors. This is very evident in the passage that uses the metaphor of a far-off mountain range, and its quick, reflexive conclusion, that removal is something that separates because it is beyond the horizon. In many ways this is the type of limitation that is inherent to any heuristic device, especially the one that wants to use the concept, or rather the physics, topography and topology of distance, as a symbolic form that would give us conceptual access to what is 'really' going on:

> The tendency of our culture towards distance is observable in more than one dominant way. (I am using the quantitative dimension of distance only as a symbol, an approximation, since there is no other more direct expression of what is going on) (ibid., p. 79).

Nonetheless, there is a qualitative aspect to this argument as well, because as much as distance (in its ability to fragment and move apart) is necessary to the psychology of the modern individual, it also effectuates a change, since now something is given up as well:

> It is interesting that contemporary aesthetics strongly emphasizes the distance between subject and object, rather than the intimacy. This special interest in items from a distance seems to be a distinctive sign of modern times, which is common to many phenomena… But these strange and distant things have relatively weak effects on our imagination, because they have no direct relationship to our personal interests. Thus they impose on our weakened nerves only comfortable excitement… They speak to us as if they were at a distance. They represent reality not with direct certainty, but with a kind of retracted acuity… The pathological symptom of *Berührungsangst* [fear of touching], the fear of getting into too close contact with objects, is spread endemically in a mild degree

> nowadays. It grows out of a kind of hyper-aesthetics, for which very live and immediate contact produces pain. For this reason the aestheticism of the majority of modern men is expressed through negative taste (ibid., p. 78).

It is self-evident from this passage, that the lost, discarded and given up element, is precisely what has been at stake all along, intimacy of and towards life. It is then interesting, that Benjamin will identify closeness (the way we gorge ourselves on and consume the space around us) as the element that forces us to lose, what distance in Simmel purports to eliminate, because both separate us from the fullness and completeness of things themselves, what Loos, for instance, will try to find in the mystery and intimacy of constructive materials, in their fully saturated organic physicality.

Of course, we should be very careful not to get too caught-up in the nomenclature of distance and closeness, since the problem here (as always) is the impotence of language to capture something that bleeds out, drop by drop, in one sweeping motion. To cut through this confusion, we should simply say (as is already dictated by common-sense) that closeness and distance, for lack of better words, are both meant to signify intimacy in varying proportions and distributions. It is the latter that Benjamin imbues with the heuristic power of a signifying base condition that means to describe its presence and ultimate lack, whereas Simmel does something similar through the former.

The more significant issue is that both Benjamin and Simmel try to comprehend and adjust perception to the *mass* phenomenon (in most literal terms) of modern reality. This project seems to always fail from the start, because the final resting place of reconciliation and resolution must lie in the extraordinary positioning of an individual and his body. This is when the physical dimensions of closeness and distance cease to be of any grave consequence:

> For a very sensitive beholder, the peculiar distance between works of art and the immediacy of experience becomes especially clear when the object is very close. For less delicate perception, a greater distance from the object itself is required for the enjoyment of this charm of distance, as for example in stylized Italian landscapes or paintings of historical dramas. The less cultivated (and childlike) aesthetic feelings are, the more fantastic, the farther removed from reality the object must be by which the artistic work achieves its impact. A more sensitive viewer does not require such a materialistic prop. The artistic form of the object itself provides him with secret charm of distance from things, liberates him from their dull pressure, carries him from the realm of nature to that of spirit. He will experience this even more intensely when art deals with proximate, low and relatively secular material (ibid., p. 77–78).

It is here, that Simmel comes closest to Benjamin's interpretation of this entire distance-ontology which in Benjamin will be expressed by distinguishing two kinds of *absorption* in relation to an object (‘absorption by’ and ‘absorption of’). The reprieve, if there is one to be found, plays itself out on the plateau of resonance; the potential feeling of oneness and connection (whether it is found in proximity/closeness or the reverse image of extremity/distance). The experience of aesthetic resistance that objects naturally enclose in their physical forms, and which the body, in its raw materiality possesses, is the only remaining realm of independence. Hence, it is not at all surprising, that in another short essay *On Aesthetic Quantities* (1903), Simmel proposes the following:

> The human figure presents an aesthetic miracle insofar as it maintains its aesthetic value through all possible enlargements and diminutions of scale. The reason for this is that its aesthetic proportions, with which we are in *solidarity*, take on such importance and concreteness for us, and have such immediate inner necessity, that they dominate everything else. Indeed, the human figure is perceived as a norm for the qualities and proportions of everything else: man is the measure of all things also in visual matters. When we are dealing with relationships among human beings, however, the problem of quantities, however, arises again.[93]

This is why the body takes shape in three different registers, as physics, biology and aesthetics, which combine to make a *psychology*, that we can perhaps subsume under the general concept of *corpus* and *corporeality*. This is seen quite clearly in Freud's ego-psychology, where resistance and the formation of its expressive power, the sonorous images and distances of words and body parts, and their economy that leads to and fro, mature into concentrations and dissolutions of anxious forms. Experience is given voice in one overarching project of making anonymity speak, by bringing it into a mode of expression that would show concern and take-care of reality on a mass scale through the individual case-study of a patient. All of this, especially when Simmel speaks of the 'aesthetic resistance' of objects, just like Freud will about the psychic resistance of patients, revolves around the idea of a truly non-exchangeable element, as something that cannot be given up and corrupted, even when one tries as far as one's aggression will be able to take the matter.[94] We are again faced, at this stage, with the notion of the out-bound search, of space that is out of reach, because that which according to Simmel is the central element of modern self-definition, life, must be stuffed with other conserving agents, which explain and settle the issue of its enervation through aggregate, reifying forms.[95]

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[93] Simmel, *On Aesthetic Quantities*, in Etzkorn, ed., p. 83.

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The message finally takes the form of subjective dissipation. It is Benjamin who sees it in the fullness of its unfolding, as a social condition, which gives up even the modicum of genuineness still preserved in the contrasting power of derangement through which the context of the fin de siècle responds. Just a few decades later reality settles into the muteness of consumptive generality, where the individual is blinded by the closeness to his own self. In one word, what is given up is the *tension* and the tone of plasticity.

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[94] Here we can glimpse the phenomenological roots of Heidegger's famous ontological/ontic extraction, which settles matters through a coup de grace of sorts, by bringing death into the self-expression of life, marking it as the only unique and non-exchangeable moment, something that falls outside the dynamics of standard cultural and psychological economy, since no one can die the other's death; a durational preservation which in the nocturnal philosophy of *Sein und Zeit*, expresses conceptually and philosophically what at the turn of the century is still visceral.

[95] It is interesting to note, that in another essay *Der Henkel* ("The Handel", in *Philosophische Kultur: Gesammelte Essais*) Simmel anticipates and pre-figures Heidegger's famous phenomenological discussion of the pitcher. Simmel's vase, through its handle arrogates to itself a meditative function between the inside and outside, as a form, which splices together the particularity of abstraction and that of reality. This type of philosophy of the use object is evident in one of the most impressive elevation of its experience at the turn of the century. I am thinking here of course of *Die Wiener Werkstätte* in Austria, or the *Werkbund* in Germany.

Benjamin's famous essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*,[96] accuses the modern condition and its mechanical reality of the loss of aura, or the enchanting distance that previously had always been the domain and provision of art:

> …that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art. *This is a symptomatic process whose significance points beyond the realm of art*. One might generalize by saying: the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. By making many reproductions it substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique existence (Benjamin, *The Work of Art*, p. 221, my emphasis).

Such 'force-field' of sprawling reproductions also implies the commodification of reality, imposing degeneracy on the previously operational guidance-principle of authenticity applied to experience. Lost is a certain uniqueness of approach, which, instead of drawing closer indirectly by maintenance of distances which enchant in the mystery of their removal, fakes intimacy by elevating the mechanics of closeness to a direct function of technological vision as immediately consumable desire: "…the medium of contemporary perception can be comprehended as decay of the aura…" (ibid., p. 222)

Benjamin's argument is quite complicated, with many nuances breaking in all at once into a line of seemingly straight-forward rendering, and very often, this short essay had been read too fast by commentators who see a straightforward relationship between technology and its simply negative impact, subsumed under the rubric of what is wrong with modernity. The subtlety of what Benjamin proposes rests on the description of a kind of replacement, not necessarily of man's needs, but the way he is forced to go about satisfying them, since now reality must be adjusted to the masses. We are not speaking here of the populous anonymity as a statistical average but rather of the massive singularity, or the mass of individualities, which must be dealt with not simply on the political or demographic plane, but also and especially via a psychology: "The adjustment of reality to the masses and of the masses to reality is a process of unlimited scope, as much for thinking as for perception" (ibid., p. 223). This is why the problem becomes one of aesthetics, since only aesthetics has the ability to mass-produce a feeling of individuality with the cohesion of a crowd. If now perception is not an event of ritualistic exercise, but a matter of instruction, contemplation and its system of overwrought attention cannot serve as the psychic principle by whose precepts reality is apprehended. This is what Benjamin drives at in his formulation of the decay of aura, which also amounts to evaporation or the decay of time, whether as history/tradition or distance:

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[96] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, hereafter cited in text.

> The concept of aura which was proposed above with reference to historical objects [as authenticity] may usefully be illustrated with reference to the aura of natural ones. We define the aura of the latter as the unique phenomenon of a distance, *however close it may be*. If, while resting on a summer afternoon, you follow with your eyes a mountain range on the horizon or a branch which casts its shadow over you, you experience the aura of those mountains, of that branch. This image makes it easy to comprehend the social bases of the contemporary decay of the aura. It rests on two circumstances, both of which are related to the increasing significance of the masses in contemporary life. Namely, the desire of contemporary masses to bring things "closer" spatially and humanly, which is just as ardent as their bent toward overcoming the uniqueness of every reality by accepting its reproduction. Every day the urge grows stronger to get hold of an object at very close range by way of its likeness, its reproduction. Unmistakably, reproduction as offered by picture magazines and newsreels differs from the image seen by the unarmed eye. Uniqueness and permanence are as closely linked in the latter as are transitoriness and reproducibility in the former. To pry an object from its shell, to destroy its aura, is the mark of a perception whose "sense of the universal equality of things" has increased to such a degree that it extracts it even from a unique object by means of reproduction. Thus is manifested in the field of perception what in the theoretical sphere is noticeable in the increasing importance of statistics (ibid., pp. 222–223, my emphasis).

If we think back to our just concluded discussion of Simmel, we seem to be again in the presence of a stark contradiction, given that Simmel refers to the loss of closeness, as the irrecoverable necessity of touch. But we may finally conclude at this point, that this seeming divergence is but an illusion, just like the conceptual division between closeness and distance. Both Benjamin and Simmel, speak of a qualitative stance which re-interprets the physical proximity or removal through the figure of perception that handles presence via contrast and tension as a way of being strung along and spanned that only contrasts are able to provide. In that sense, it does not really matter how close or how far an object or an experience lies. It is rather the ability to distance oneself from phenomena that might be too close and bring oneself closer emotionally and intellectually to phenomena that physically, almost lie beyond the range of the natural power of our perceptive apparatus (like the far-off mountain ranges) that is the principle of construction according to which the self achieves some sort of phenomenological prowess. But such acuity is not a matter of magnification, at least not in the way that technology achieves the feat.

The example of statistics with which Benjamin ends the passage quoted above, creates an interesting paradox which lies in statistics' uncanny ability to magnify the individual as the function of a population and vice versa. Statistics create a perceptive mass, which through the census erects another sensory machine; a type of social sense, which is then appended to the self and functions almost on par with the eye and the ear. It magnifies by giving the other senses a mistaken outlet, and it is this kind of magnification which inadvertently brings about a merely sketchy psychological outlook, since psychology, as a crude instrument of measurement (against which Freud works very diligently throughout his life) is nothing more than the application of the false security of closeness to the self and the body. What changes here is the role played by the subject, for instead of a dramaturgical performance for an audience (like, for instance, the courtly performance of display or the drama of hysteria) man must now perform for a technical apparatus. Benjamin's archetypal example of this kind of logic, the logic of unprecedented vectors is film:

> For the film, what matters primarily is that the actor represents himself to the public before the camera, rather than representing someone else... What matters is that the part is acted not for an audience but for a mechanical contrivance... "The film actor", wrote Pirandello, "feels as if in exile – exiled not only from the stage but also from himself. With a vague sense of discomfort he feels inexplicable emptiness: his body loses its corporeality, it evaporates, it is deprived of reality, life, voice, and the noises caused by his moving about, in order to be changed into a mute image, flickering an instant on the screen, then vanishing into silence... (ibid., p. 229).

This configuration of experiences and perceptions, makes the regressive step in the application of attention, for instead of the feeling of *being* a body (what the fin de siècle's version of vanishing and disappearance still tries to preserve), man now reduces his own stature to merely *having* a body in the numbness of the strained nervous system. Interestingly, Benjamin accuses psychoanalysis of a similar transgression: "The camera introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses" (ibid., p. 237), although optics is not at all inconspicuous in relation to the ego even in Freud, as is evident, for instance, in the theory of self-relation of the 'I' as narcissism, or the 'I' as the projection of a surface, which will lead to its real blossoming in the post-war psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan in the form of the specular 'I' and the mirror stage. For now though, the issue is still that of attention, disinvestment and unravelling of distance:

> Fifty years ago, a slip of the tongue passed more or less unnoticed. Only exceptionally may such a slip have revealed dimensions of depth in a conversation which had seemed to be taking its course on the surface. Since the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* things have changed. This book isolated and made analyzable things which had heretofore floated along unnoticed in the broad stream of perception. For the entire spectrum of

> optical, and now also acoustical perception, the film has brought about a similar deepening of apperception. (ibid., p. 235)

Writing in the 1930s, Benjamin can clearly perceive the ebb and flow of history of the immediately preceding decades, the end of the swell initiated by the fin de siècle and the oncoming tidal wave of another one, in the guise of Fascism, which operates on the basis of politics as aesthetics,[97] instead of merely imbuing aesthetics with the politics of a reconstructive message, as the *Jahrhundertwende* still does.

What we are attempting to read through Benjamin is already an early consequence of the fin de siècle's operational methodology, and in the end, perhaps even its failure to counteract the loss of distance and intimacy (the decay of aura in Benjamin's language), by making the process of decaying sensibilities into an areola of a possibility/expectation for a new sensory value which would stabilize the prospects of self-maintenance. In this gesture, the logic of the fin de siècle does attempt to bring closer, but from a distant realm of the unknown depth, and not from the easily accessible banality of the everyday life. This is why it still is a vector of a response and not a structuring factor that it later becomes. This is also why the body still matters, why it is still *matter* and not simply an image, a refracted copy of itself, as is evident through the archetypal (for Benjamin) case of film. Cinematography organizes itself as reproducibility of sameness, whereas the body as *aesthetics of decay* allots just enough time for the repetition of difference. The consequence of such a precariousness of balance as salvage, and through it preservation of the quickly diminishing ontology of distance (the fin de siècle logic *par excellence*) is that the positioning of the body becomes a *fait accompli* of organic chemistry, for in order to differentiate itself from its own physicality, the body must look for its own structure outside its physical restrictions, without at the same time dispensing with materiality of encounters – something that is completely annulled with the replication of the body in the technological image. The proposal for such tight-rope walking situates itself in the confines of intimate distancing which reinvigorates its structures of delay, and hence duration, which is not that of an instantaneous release (the spontaneous velocity of the cinematographic image) but the expectation for a moment, which can still be created and not simply lived as a servo-mechanism of functionality.

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[97] Benjamin, for instance, quotes this excerpt from the Italian Futurist, Marinetti, at the end of his essay: "For twenty-seven years we Futurists have rebelled against the branding of war as antiaesthetic… Accordingly we state: …War is beautiful because it establishes man's dominion over the subjugated machinery by means of gas masks, terrifying megaphones, flame throwers, and small tanks. War is beautiful because it initiates the dreamt-of metallization of the human body. War is beautiful because it enriches a flowering meadow with the fiery orchids of machine guns. War is beautiful because it combines the gunfire, the cannonades, the cease-fire, the scents, and the stench of putrefaction into a symphony.

13. The Ruined Psychology

If man loses what is psychologically necessary for his functioning, the ability to calibrate distances, then it is the ontology and the phenomenology of the *ruin* that encloses the geometric, structural reflection of the channels of communication which create new, meditative networks of signification which make distance speak (Figure 18, Appendix).

In his 1911 essay on the ruin (*Die Ruine*),[98] Simmel proposes that architecture (*Baukunst*) possesses the resilience and the ability to combine and maintain the two antagonistic forces of nature and intellect, within itself. It gains such an ability through its potential to fall into a state of disrepair and decay, eventually even degenerating into the state of a ruin.

The ruin embraces the precarious stability of hesitation, of an impossibility to decide finally and unequivocally, thus exuding the tension of potential that expresses something of the duration already lived, and the possibility of its further recuperation as well as its final expiation. Anticipating the impending discussion taken up in the following chapter, we might want to consider how the image of a ruin, would apply to a phenomenon such as Schoenberg's music? Is it not full of sound that ruins itself and regresses with every step into the protracted incantation of its own silence?

Whereas in Simmel, man and culture can still look for a reconciliation in the pragmatics and dynamics of the ruin as an aesthetic principle, everything is already ruined for Benjamin, gone too far in the amnesia and anaemia of an unresponsive mass. It is a social expression of a debilitating condition that can also afflict the ruin proper, as

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[98] Simmel, "Die Ruine", in *Philosophische Kultur: Gesammelte Essais*, pp. 137–146. Hereafter cited in text.

Simmel points out, when it has fallen too excessively into the state of rubble, as is the case with ancient Greek ruins, which face us mutely, simply as slabs of stone overgrown with moss. The ruin, then, must remain something living and animated.

If the entire fin de siècle problematic is one of reanimation, then Otto Wagner, in his tour de force of Viennese modernism, attempts intuitively to reintroduce the modern self into the actual construction of spaces, thus mitigating the alienating modern conditioning, as well as expressing its basic element, in the formula of a style that ruins classical cohesion of form, while maintaining the balance and tension of such a de-constructive procedure, in the frozen choreography of a building as a mime.[99]

Wagner's *Baukunst* proposes a solution to the problem of mass, *en masse*, meaning collectively, since buildings, being in the public sphere, must be engaged with, like one would engage a landscape – inescapably. This solution is similar to Simmel's resolve, which mitigates the tension of individual versus mass society through the aesthetics of style:

> What drives the modern individual so strongly toward style is the unburdening and veiling of the personal, which is the essence of the style. Subjectivity and individuality have reached the point of collapse, and in the stylized making of form – from social manners to the furnishing of a dwelling – resides an appeasement, a toning down of this acute personality to a general idea and its law. It is as if the ego could no longer support itself solely, or at least no longer wished to reveal itself, and so it puts on a more general, more typical, in short, a stylized garment… Stylized expression, the way of life, taste – all are limits of ways of distancing, in which the exaggerated subjectivity of the period finds a counterbalance and a mask.[100]

The mask, in fact, in its two potential meanings as something that reveals or hides, is a regulatory system of distancing. Even though such aesthetic mask as style might still be a miscarriage of liberation, it is also an absolutely indispensable device which must be present to turn a simple act of communication (visual, verbal or tectonic), into a form of artistic expression which dispenses a psychological screen on the increasingly unwieldy reality. Performed correctly, such aesthetic psychology becomes a habit forming architectonics of nearness, which does not fall into the ideology and the ill-effects of over-magnification, of closeness in the myopia of enclosures, pure and simple.

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[99] For a discussion and analysis of Wagner's early designs according to the paradigm of a 'ruin-in-reverse', see J. Duncan Berry 'From Historicism to Architectural Realism: On some of Wagner's Sources', in *Otto Wagner: Reflections and the Raiment of Modernity* (ed. Harry Francis Mallgrave), pp. 243–278.

[100] Simmel, "Das Problem des Stiles", *Die Kunst* 19 (1908): 307, my translation.

In his essay on art in the technological age, Benjamin himself speaks of architecture, in a manner of a special case, which falls outside of the mechanical 'steam-roller' of technology and its imaging system, or at least, due to its special historical circumstances, has the potential to do so:

> Buildings have been man's companions since primeval times. Many art forms have developed and perished... But the human need for shelter is lasting. Architecture has never been idle. Its history is more ancient than that of any other art, and its claim to being a living force has significance in every attempt to comprehend the relationship of the masses to art. Buildings are appropriated in a twofold manner: by use and by perception – or rather, by touch and sight. Such appropriation cannot be understood in terms of the attentive concentration of a tourist before a famous building. On the tactile side there is no counterpart to contemplation on the optical side. Tactile appropriation is accomplished not so much by attention as by habit. As regards architecture, habit determines to a large extent even optical reception. The latter, too, occurs much less through rapt attention than by noticing the object in incidental fashion. This mode of appropriation, developed with reference to architecture, in certain circumstances acquires canonical value. For the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation, alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation (Benjamin, *The Work of Art*, pp. 239–240).

Anyone who chooses to go back to Benjamin's text, and reads immediately preceding and following the above fragment will tend, almost as quickly, to conclude that I have read out of context, and thus misrepresented what Benjamin actually says, since architecture is actually identified as the first medium of mass distribution, which deals in units of distraction and not attentive contemplation, which sits at the centre of Benjamin's argument of diagnosis and recuperation:

> A man who concentrates before a work of art is absorbed by it… In contrast, the distracted mass absorbs the work of art. This is most obvious with regard to buildings. Architecture has always represented the prototype of a work of art the reception of which is consummated by a collectivity in a state of distraction. The laws of its reception are most instructive (ibid., p. 239).

In this respect architecture and its habit forming, tactile structural self is similar to the phenomenon of film, because:

> The distracted person, too, can form habits. More, the ability to master certain tasks in a state of distraction proves that their solution has become a matter of habit. Distraction as provided by art presents a covert of the extent to which new tasks have become soluble by apperception. Since, moreover, individuals are tempted to avoid such tasks, art will tackle the most difficult and most important ones where it is able to mobilize the masses. Today it does so in film (ibid., p. 240).

The accusation that can be levelled against Benjamin, is predictably that of idealism, of elevating a very restricted experience of contemplation to a paradigmatic structure of historical reality, even when he attempts to socialize the issue (and thus in his own way mass-produce it historically) by assigning it to the mechanics of ritualistic cultivation. But more important is the analytical undercurrent of Benjamin's text, which, through the argument about architecture, makes the coupling concentration/contemplation and distraction/consumption, whose parametric axioms operate according to the rule of absorption-by and mere absorption and hence, in both cases directionally-reversed consummation, into a basic problem of reception and of being received; something akin to Derrida's hospitality as both invitation/hosting, and hostility – the fluidity of the line of division between them etymologically fused.[101]

We are dealing here with an economy in the manner of the Greek *oikos* (household), since the act of *acceptance* (art's hospitality as the contemplative absorption by), in opposition to mere absorption as *reception*, are both inadvertently ways of expenditure and digestion. The important difference lies in where the agency is located.

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[101] See Jacques Derrida and Anne Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*.

The absent-minded examiner of art, or reality in general, simply receives in his consumption, thus exhibiting an overabundance of patience and hospitality, whereas the contemplative individuality is received by, making the act first of all that of a decision to accept, which by default operates in the dangerous proximity to the act of hostility, whether as rejection by the host, or the non-acceptance of the invitation. This is where the subtlety of Benjamin's text revolves concentrically around the shape of its own voracity.

The relationship between acceptance and reception, which for Benjamin is by and large settled by the overbearing activity of the mass society, is the problem whose exact distribution the fin de siècle reality takes upon itself to solve, even if that role is simply presented to it by default, as a historical necessity. It attempts to do so through a curious blend of forces, which try to cultivate and implant a new habit-forming space of collective apperception – the latter not being that of mere optics or contemplation, but, precisely, of tactility as a process of seeing – what architecture proper tends towards naturally, and what the architectonics of aesthetics, across the many communicative fields, tries to reproduce and re-absorb.

In this latest surge into the setting of the *Jahrhundertwende*, we are once again dealing with an aporia, a contradiction which forces the impossibility and incommensurability of smooth functionality and rugged/massive reality, into a process of transgression, as both overcoming/elevation and disobedience. We are thus presented with attention as something that must acquire the role of habit-forming principle, two notions which, as we have seen above, Benjamin strictly separated. Habit cannot span attention, for it constructs a habitat, or habitus, a veil in the form of mass behaviour and the behaviour of the masses. But can this formula be turned around? Can attention be gainfully employed in the service of habit that will still be collective, but not fall into the narcolepsy of mindless repetitive motion? – in short the kind of collective habit as aesthetics, which is actually distancing, which makes distant, and thus opens up perspectives, if not of contemplation, then of interpretation and analysis; the kind of feeling of removal, but also intrigue, danger, seduction and intimacy, that Fridolin, Schitzler's main character in the *Dream Story*, feels, when he somewhat unexpectedly finds himself in the midst of a masked ball.

This is the kind of habitus that *misrecognizes* the twisted lines of its own habitual institution, misremembers that it is supposed to fall into the strict involution of determinacy, thus experiencing the aporia of the mask in Bahr's *Augenmusik*, in *Jugendstil's* plant; an aporia of a body that lets itself be absorbed by its own physicality, its own performance and drama, and thus a body, which, the way it is presented in Schiele's imagery, must wear a different skin which masks its voracious coherence, while at the same time revealing its aesthetics, as a new collective interpretation. We have already designated this entire complex as aesthetics of disappearance, whose ingredients, when added together, activate a chemical chain reaction of tensions and forces; a splitting apart of congruence so that the visible traces of energies thus released can be registered, if ever so briefly.

Otto Wagner's architecture of spaces and places is exemplary on this account, as can, for instance, be surmised by looking at some of his sketches, particularly the design for the *Ferdinandbrücke* (Figure 17, Appendix), whose overall effect invokes "…an image that is meant to explain by visual analogy the inherent forces and tensions. The pylons endow the construction with power; they pretend to be the "actors and performers" whereas the steel beams appear to have a passive role of reacting to forces".[102] Wagner does not simply erect buildings, but makes space expressive by creating a theatre of encounter, something perhaps akin to DeCerteau's city walker, but on much more (cartographically speaking) conscious scale – a conversation between distance and intimacy, which sound instinctively carries along with its inflections, and without which psychoanalysis would be just another surface psychology.

Interestingly, Hermann Bahr deems it necessary to expose the figure of Wagner's personality and professional/artistic activity, against the context of the city and its inhabitants, thus immediately bringing into relief the basic tension of the entire fin de siècle project; its attempt to derive from the swelling mass of modernity, a rejuvenated practice in the shape of individualized collectivity that would move against the trend of collectivization of the subject. The symbolism and the phenomenon of the mask, plays an important role in Bahr's contrasting description of Wagner vs. the city, which appears in a short celebratory article on the occasion of Wagner's 70th birthday:

> …the tragedy of the Viennese is constituted in this, namely: they are never allowed to have a natural face. The genuine man in Vienna, has been certainly [?] forbidden in the last two hundred years… And our eternal Viennese problem is whether, in the end, we will finally have enough strength and courage, to take-off the masks and show to ourselves, who we are!... And no one, among those who presently live in Austria, endured and persevered in this task, in a more marvellous way, than Otto Wagner. Otto Wagner is the opposite of Vienna's Ringstrasse. Whereas everything on it, speaks to effect, Wagner is all about expression; where there is arbitrariness, here one finds necessity; there swindle, kitsch, theatre, here always merely what the matter requires.[103]

In the year 1900, Bahr also writes about the experience of walking on the Ringstrasse, in the following manner:

> If you walk across the Ring, you have the impression of being in the midst of a real carnival. Everything masked, everything disguised… Life has become too serious for that

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[102] Neymeyer, "Iron and Stone", in Mallgrave, ed., *Otto Wager*, p. 129.

[103] Bahr, *Kulturprofil der Jahrhundertwende*, p. 283, my translation.

> sort of thing. We want to look life in the face. This is what we mean when we talk of 'realist architecture', that is, that the building must not only serve its intended purpose, but must also express, not conceal, that purpose.[104]

But one needs another abstraction, another layer of communicative tissue to look life in the face directly, because this involves a closing of distance, a close up, which, when simply released technologically, creates the opposite condition from the one intended. What must happen, then, is a construction of another mask, that would reveal in its physiognomy, while also holding one in a safe distance of removal, and thus in the tension of both, mystery, maybe even frustration, but also anticipation. The principle here seem to be that of *action at a distance*, a sort of social physics via aesthetics, which, just like Lipps' and Worringer's theory of empathy (*Einfühlungstheorie*) tries to capture the notion of distanciation, through the mutual resonance of acceptance between the subject and the object.

In Worringer's estimation, aesthetics is precisely a psychology, which moves along such trajectory of reconciliation. In his 1905 doctoral dissertation,[105] which, in its own time, became quite a famous exegeses, Worringer re-works Lipps' aesthetic theory of empathy, trying to make it fall in line with the abstract/transcendental dimension, thus expanding its original formulation. Such expansion progresses away from the strictly phenomenological objectification of life through art, which releases the harmonizing force of pleasure or displeasure as a bodily sensation (*Einfühlung*, which translated more directly implies oneness and togetherness of feeling), resting on the other pole – the one whose surface makes decided breaks with the world as natural self-affirmation, and connects with it through a string of continually vibrating intonations, thus creating its own certainty through removal or distance, or even more radically, transition into the inorganic:

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[104] J. Duncan Berry, "From Historicism to Architectural Realism", in *Otto Wagner*, p. 245, my translation.

[105] Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy*, hereafter quoted in text.

> …all transcendental art sets out with the aim of de-organicising the organic, i.e. of translating the mutable and conditional into values of unconditional necessity. But such a necessity man is able to feel only in the great world beyond the living, in the world of the inorganic. This led him to rigid lines, to inert crystalline form. He translated everything living into the language of these imperishable and unconditional values. For these abstract forms, liberated from all finiteness, are the only ones, and the highest, in which man can find rest from the confusion of the world picture (*Abstraction and Empathy*, p. 134).

Naturally, we can right away recognize Riegl in this paragraph, on whose theory Worringer relies quite heavily for the general art-historical, conceptual and argumentative direction. The interesting aspect of the above assessment is that the purity of such transcendental art has no more validity at the beginning of the 20th century, because: "What happened was that translation into the laws governing the inorganic was brought to an end and replaced by translation into the laws governing the human spirit. Science emerged, and the transcendental art lost ground" (ibid., p. 134). In other words, Worringer seems to intimate, that art in general has lost its purpose as a communicative tissue between the unfathomable force of the world and the always overwhelmed individual, this task now falling under the auspices of a new psyche, and a new volition towards self-expression, which is simply designated by the signifier – science. This seems to liberate art, giving it the hard-won frivolity, which remains within the bounds of artificial actualization of independence, but is not invested with the absolute burden of meaning: "Its delight is no longer the rigid regularity of the abstract, but the mild harmony of organic being" (ibid., p. 135). Thus, art wins autonomy (if not authenticity) of behaviour because it does not carry within its phenomenon the responsibility for a current world-view. In this it can at least take on the role of a therapeutic tool and a medium of collective remedial activity.

Worringer is attempting to 'get at' the materiality of a force, which would create its own realm of experience – a hub of a network that would, if not mediate, then at least mitigate the circumstances of phenomenological irresponsibility. In the end, the type of theory he proposes, a mode of experiencing the *style* of objective/material phenomena, that we have been painstakingly at work to explicate, by his own admission, is encapsulated in a curious and chance happening, which, at the time, made him "…the medium of the necessities of the period" (ibid., p. vii):

> The compass of my instinct had pointed in a direction inexorably preordained by the dictate of the spirit of the age… On a visit to Paris for purposes of study, duty leads the young student of art history, whose maturity of development is not yet such as to have presented him with a choice of subject for his thesis, into the Trocadero Museum. A grey forenoon destitute of all emotional atmosphere. Not a soul in the museum. The solitary sound: my footsteps ringing in the wide halls in which all other life is extinct. Neither does any stimulating force issue from the monuments, cold plaster reproduction of medieval cathedral sculpture. I compel myself to study 'the rendering of drapery'. Nothing more. And my impatient glance is frequently directed toward the clock.
>
> Then… an interruption! A door in the background opens, admitting two further visitors. What a surprise as they draw nearer: one of them is known to me! It is the Berlin philosopher, Georg Simmel. I have only a fleeting acquaintance with him dating from semesters at Berlin years ago. During this period I once 'gatecrashed' two of his lectures…
>
> Well, besides my own steps, those of Simmel and his companion now ring past the monuments. Of their conversation all I hear is an unintelligible echo.
>
> Why do I relate this situation in such detail? What is so remarkable and memorable about it? This: it was the ensuing hours spent in the halls of the Trocadero with Simmel, in a contact consisting solely in the atmosphere created by his presence, that produced in a sudden, explosive act of birth the world of ideas which then found its way into my thesis… (ibid., pp. viii–ix).

This strange encounter of presence as resonance, or an echo, not only pinpoints the basic tents of Worringer's reformulated theory of empathy, but brings us full circle, not only in this echoing narrative, but also and more immediately, in the discussion spread out over the last few pages. For here, we have distance, as a personal, social and aesthetic quality, enmeshed in the incalculable consequences of effects that measure out practical intimacy in the units of surprise as expectation.

The latest resting point to which our discussion seems to have deviated, is the possibility that what stands under the name and the banner of art at the turn of the century, is not simply a creative/artistic product of 'pictures at an exhibition', but a euphemism for an existential attitude and positioning, whose lack of the proper name, must simply cover itself with the mask of another, easily accessible one. Art is chosen, because its enclosure creates a feeling of extraordinary circumstances, of standing apart, of being more valuable and true, but also permeable enough to be accommodating to the frequently changing currents, tastes and fashions. In fact, we could even say, that the entire fin de siècle reality, becomes a *whimsical and flimsy* reality, which anticipates its total technological/communicative release as acceleration, just a few decades later. This is how modern aesthetics, which does not orient itself to the field of aesthetics in the strict sense, but rather to reality as a *pliable point of contact* is unavoidably possessed by the spirit of empathy as the communicative/perpetuation circuit of perception, thus carving out for itself a new space of encounter:

> Modern aesthetics, which has taken the decisive step from aesthetic objectivism to aesthetic subjectivism, i.e. which no longer takes the aesthetic as the starting point of its investigations, but proceeds from behaviour of the contemplating subject, culminates in a doctrine that may be characterized by the broad general name of the theory of empathy (ibid., p. 4).

Worringer's extension of this principle into the realm of abstraction, and his argument that it is only after such inclusion of the opposite pole, as he describes it, that aesthetics can serve as the general condition for apprehending the current social/human condition, does not change the important fact that art in its heretofore unprecedented blend of forces, becomes the storage of the total existential capital.

If art, as this ubiquitous anonymity of a signifier which means to indicate everything that is potentially important and has weight, or in any case, further accentuate its constant pull; if it is to be considered as the archetype of bone shattering events, from the most miniscule to the monumental, then it must also become a totality which, in its plasticity and pliability, recovers a psychic/ontological layer, on a collective scale – in other words, it must venture out on a form-finding mission en mass. This is evident, for instance, in Wagner's polemical arguments about *Baukunst*:

> There are thousands and thousands of things that modern culture has devised, and for many of them art today has already found forms – many have even been given a perfect form. They do not recall the forms of past times; they are completely new because their premises and their essential principle have issued from our very own ambition and perception (Wagner, *Modern Architecture*, p. 121).

Art, in the end, as the archetype of existential architectonics, in its most immediate tectonic (i.e., objective, material) expression, is architecture – an assessment that Wagner shares with Simmel and seems to take very seriously indeed, perhaps grotesquely so, from our current standpoint. Thus, besides being on a form-finding mission, art is also the generative as well as corrective device, ontologically speaking, and the architect, is the most advanced and progressive image of the modern man: "The architect with his happy combination of idealism and realism has been praised as the crowning glory of modern man. Unfortunately he alone feels the truth of these words, while his contemporaries stand off to the side, little interested. I too, at the risk of being accused of a delusion of grandeur, must join in the song of praise" (ibid., p. 62). This opening sentence of Wagner's theoretical magnum opus, is to reiterate such a view, throughout its pages, always emphasizing the consumptive and contemplative role of the entire artistic/architectonic project, two modes of deliberation, which, as we have seen, Benjamin only a few years later, will find completely incompatible and irreconcilable.

But at the turn of the century, the question and the activity are joined in the expectancy for a new functionality, which revolves around a new general alignment as distancing through invested, that is, consumptive/absorptive directionality – here is Wager again: "Everywhere artists appear on the scene, again pointing out to industry *the right path* and thus demonstrating how unspeakably depressing eclecticism was, which lacked any artistic feeling" (ibid., p. 117). One of the most telling signs of how far-reaching this entire re-constitutive project must be, is the comprehensive inclusion by Wagner of practically every single artistic and engineering expertise in the architectural 'tool box', including acoustics:

> Though not actually a concern of art, a few short remarks on acoustics belong in the chapter "Practice of Art". Many architects unfortunately still have the view that the acoustics of a space cannot be systematically determined, and that success or failure in this regard must always be enshrouded in mystical darkness. This is not so. The architect is able to project any space in such a way that its acoustics can be predetermined with apodictic certainty. The theory guiding this determination is quite simple and runs as follows: make the length of the sound waves as equal as possible and avoid all reflections. Solving the first part of this law is rather simple and is in any case not all that important. Regarding reflections, however, the architect is in a position to avoid all reflections by immediately dispersing the sound waves striking the enclosing surfaces of the room. With planar surfaces the simplest way to achieve this is to design these surfaces with small undulating or angular profiles or to cover them with fabric. The presence of a crowd of people also has the desired effect. Halls with columns, sharp corners, projections, too much height, etc., will therefore always have acoustic problems (ibid., p. 136, note).

The desire for total control and predictability of even something as diffuse and unwieldy as sound, speaks to the demand placed on experience, its control and mastery in the sensuous realm of perception. These are also elementary and very real functional conditions, that both psychoanalysis and 12-tone music will find indispensable, as they try very carefully but also most comprehensively to impress the design of their own psychic and musical spaces, on a range of encounters, or on anything that, deliberately or accidentally finds its way under the scope of their constructive logic.

14. Method and Logic as Sonority – Anonymity and the Ruin

The majority of historical studies exploring the configuration of time known now as the turn of the century, take music to be a phenomenon that, in its own expression, is also informed by the prevalent artistic currents of the time, even if acknowledging the always mismatched reality of actually being able grasp such musical reality, which responds to most attempts of systematic classification, via the discourse of escape. This is indeed the conclusion drawn by Walter Frisch, who observes that:

> Even in such writers as Carl Schorske or Roger Shattuck, music tends to remain undernourished – sometimes abused – perhaps because its basic language and "meaning" are notoriously difficult to decipher, let alone relate convincingly to some broader zeitgeist.[106]

This kind of under-nourishment is exercised historiographically in two ways: (1) by forcing music into a collaboration with other artistic media, and adjusting its structure to fit their general aesthetic history (i.e., proposing, for example, that music around the turn of the century derives its shape from Jugendstil); and (2) by excluding the possibility, that music, or at least sound as form (since music is already a second-order construct) instead of being simply reactive and absorptive, might in fact be the best carrier of the encoded logic of experience, the depository of its overall generative principle, being infected with it, which unlike all the other 'little realities', makes enough noise to be heard through the symptom of sound itself. The methodological twist that Frisch proposes, citing as example the already well exposed moment of Jugendstil in our narrative, is also expressive of the way we have been making the preponderance of evidence, visible, because: "…one way around this apparent critical impasse [of theoretical misinformation about music and its historical stance] is to ask not what Jugendstil can do for music, but what music can or did for Jugendstil. Rather than looking vainly for traces of visual Jugendstil in music, we should first consider the matter the other way around (Frisch, *Music and Jugenstil*, p. 143). This approach is valid, not only because there is a preponderance of evidence that music, or at least theory of sound was used as signifying matter by the 'fathers' of modernity (we need only to mention August Endell,[107] who, in turn, proved to be a major influence on Kandinsky) as the 'wire-mesh' to which concrete empirical realities, in their full complexity, were fastened, but also because, sound or acoustics, in its development during the previous century, became a significant scientific, physiological and psychological field, which was pushed to the forefront of all sensory realities. We may only mention the psycho-physics of Helmholz[108] in this vein or even the theory of consonance and dissonance proposed by Theodor Lipps.[109] In other words, sound and through it music, was not left untouched anymore by their relegation to the realm of pleasure, entertainment or ideology, but rather, it became a well established matter of serious scientific investigation in the latter part of the 19th century – a momentum which carries its burrowing force into the turn of the century, especially into the seemingly always prosaic theory of art – its epistemology and hermeneutics.

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[106] Walter Frisch, "Music and Jugendstil", *Critical Inquiry* 17 (Autumn 1990): 139.

The artistic 'establishment' feels the urgency and the necessity to find a new point of contact with reality, since art has all of a sudden acquired the responsibility of being in charge of the increasingly anonymous world and its expression; a reversal of immense proportions from the medieval world-view, for instance, where artistic impulse floated in the apparently seamless integration into a pre-ordered reality. In short, art is now playing the role of reality's supporting structure (as opposed to being merely an epiphenomenon of an independent, religious ontology), counteracting and stabilizing a new kind of despondency, and this means that art has been spotted, and pointed at, pointed to, forced into a process of creating its own theory of legitimacy, and thus earning its keep as a structure which is both a part of and apart from the general configuration of things. It is especially the grammar and the syntax of sound that serves as the language of this identity-finding and identity-forming discourse.

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[107] Endell was the architect of the Jugendstil 'Bunte Theater' in Berlin, where Schoenberg found his first employment in 1901. See H. H. Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg His Life, World and Work*, p. 55–56.

[108] See Hermann von Helmholtz, *On the Sensations of Tone*, whose theory of overtones is the harmonic principle on the basis of which Schoenberg erects his argument in the *Harmonielehre* ('Theory of Harmony').

[109] See Theodor Lipps, *Consonance and Dissonance in Music*.

Historically, the framing of sound into a musical form, had achieved a significant amount of value as cultural capital, while at the same time, always preserving the titillating seductiveness of an unbreakable code in its unwieldy, raw mystery. If sound always preserves the possibility and the potential of degeneration into a merely wild and brutal cry, into pure noise[110] and roughness of a psyche at its most dispersed point, then it also mirrors the psychology of the modern individual, as it is for instance explicated in Freud's drive theory. Such code which encapsulates the generative impulse of materiality as plasticity (since it has the potential to break down signifying structures down to their raw element of a phoneme or a tone) can only be approached through the lens of a formative surface, which works according to the distribution of resonance, and its percussive durations; a form which closes in on distance by elaborating its mechanics through the most immediate delivery system naturally available: the one of the auditory channel (hence, as we have seen, the importance and the constantly repeated 'physiognomy' of a cry, in the fin de siècle polemics).

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[110] The Italian Futurists through the Noisism/Brutism movement are exemplary on this account. Through the technique of syncretism and synesthesia, the idea was to weld the senses together, appending them to each other into different aggregate complexes. So that, for instance, Carlo Carrà's "The painting of Sounds, Noises, and Smells" (1913), calls for 'sonorification' of the visual field: "We Futurist painters maintain that sounds, noises and smells are incorporated in the expression of lines, volumes and colours just as lines, volumes and colours are incorporated in the architecture of a musical work" (in Mary Ann Caws, ed., *A Century of Isms*, p. 204). Luigi Russolo, in his "Art of Noises", from the same year, castigates Western art music and calls for the infiltration of the standard musical tone, by raw, environmental sounds: "Now we are satiated and WE FIND FAR MORE ENJOYMENT IN THE COMBINATION OF THE NOISES OF TRAMS, BACKFIRING MOTORS, CARRIAGES AND BAWLING CROWDS THAN IN REHEARING, for example, THE "EROICA' OR THE "PASTORAL" (in Caws, p. 207). The "art of noises" also makes its way into poetry, as is evident, for instance, in DADA (a nonsensical word, which, as Tristan Tzara in his 1918 "Dada Manifesto" says "MEANS NOTHING"). One among many examples of "sound poetry" which makes use of noise and gibberish "freeing the word into its own 'innermost alchemy'" (in Caws p. 289), is Kurt Schwitters' *Ursonate*. The Dada movement originates in Zurich, at the end of WWI: "At the first Dada evening, on July 14, Huelsenbeck read a poem with "real sounds"… The poem becomes a static object that can be read from all sides at once and, in fact, in several languages at once, like "The Admiral is looking for a house to rent", read simultaneously in German, French, and English" (in Caws, p. 288). Now, if we think back to Anna O.'s hysteria, and her extempore rendering of texts into another language, could we not say that she is really the first Dada poet?

Thus, August Endell is able to write in the following manner about the unknown art whose practice focuses as much on the immediacy of perception, as it does on the underlying, living-fossils of encoded impulses:

> At present, we still have little in the way of form-art; that is, form-images [*formale Gebilde*] which are nothing and mean nothing in themselves, which affect us directly, without any intellectual mediation, like *the tones in music*. This type of effect [*diese Wirkungsweise*], this new art, is almost unknown, and the little of it that does exist, is dismissed with a scowl...[111]

Endell seems to indicate that a form should be and is (when properly aroused via a medium) a sort of symbiotic dwelling, which shelters and stimulates meaningful experience, which is tactile as well as habit-rousing, but also, in a large measure unconscious, a stance that is quite similar to Otto Wagner's architectural premise.[112] But if form be shelter in this manner, then it is also inescapably a sort of stasis, a paradigm of stability, of non-progression and wilting-away in the confines that maintain in the rhythmic duration of functional exchange; a kind of death by domestication, which is not comfort inspiring but rather, produces the uncanny or *unheimlich* effect of strangeness and dislocation; an attitude which perhaps provides the best description of how the modern individual begins to increasingly experience his own body, its physicality.

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[111] August Endell, "Möglichkeiten und Ziele einer neuen Architektur" ('Possibilities and Goals for a New Architecture), *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* 1 (1898–1898): 141–152. My translation and emphasis.

[112] As Walter Frisch further explains: "Form-art is to be achieved above all by the treatment of line, which can affect the viewer directly, much as tones affect the listener. Endell outlines a psychological theory whereby different kinds of lines exercise certain kinds of effects on the observer. Length or shortness of lines are function of time; thickness and thinness are functions of tension. It is the temporal aspect of Endell's theory that provides another point of contact with music. For he insists that a viewer perceives a line successively – that a line implies duration, the passage of time. Endell's *Formkunst*, then, becomes like that of music a temporal one, one that acknowledges and exploits the passage of time" (*Music and Jugendstil*, p. 144). This principle, in general, becomes the thesis on which architecture relies, in its desire to become the *Baukunst*; how masking, dressing etc. create the *tempo* of otherwise mere engineering.

It is *expectation* that operates according to this logic of uncanny, strange, foreign familiarity, which in the gesture of the *unheimlich* construction, gives the 'at home' feeling without the completely accomplished forgetfulness and the complacency that such a condition inspires – a face of hospitality with a hostile mask that means to reveal the visceral genuineness of the otherwise stale experience.

Perhaps the entire turn of the century setting could simply be identified by and assigned to the formula of a repeated experience which belongs to the mass phenomenon as *the psychology of expectation*. This issue, in fact, is treated directly in the *Journal for the Psychology and Physiology of the Sense Organs*, right at the point of the turn, in 1900. The article written by Kristian B. R. Aars and entitled simply *Die Erwartung*, precedes immediately Theodor Lipps' essay on the theory of empathy, which (when its specifics are considered more carefully than we have been able to do) turns out to be a progressive elaboration of the rhythm of expectation as a way of finding oneself in the moment of an encounter between the self and the object that stands in the immediate field of 'perceptive' consumption.

The crux of the matter lies in perception. Expectation as empathy, as the resonant feeling of oneness or togetherness with a thing or a phenomenon, in spite of the 'personal politics' of the sensory organs and their 'selfishness' (their power to arrogate the world to themselves) must nonetheless find a way of being in the uncomfortable position which shares itself with the foreign, the unfamiliar and potentially threatening. Such way of being together can only be accomplished and carried out in perception that disowns the primary functionality with which the sense organs are endowed (the natural attitude which struggles with bouts of irrational certainty and delusional suspicion) thus entering the logic of *transgression* and *circumvention*, which eventually stabilizes itself into a method of *transversal* and *circumnavigation*. Here, we are inadvertently in a very idiosyncratic space of flows, levels, intensities, and their exchange of values – a sort of psychic calculus that is the mark of distinction of not only Freudian psychoanalytic theory, but also the entire artistic, philosophical and scientific field, which resounds with the increasing intensity of a paradigm around the time-line circa 1900.

Theodor Lipps, for instance, refers to such formative/informative domain as the 'rhythmic-psychic happening', anticipating Freud's characterisation of his brand of psychology, including the concept of the compulsion to repeat (*Wiederholungszwang*):

> Rhythm possesses an all-encompassing meaning inside the psychic life. In general, rhythm is a specific type of succession of particular psychic processes of the same type… I can also say, that it attempts in the same manner to rhythmicize [*zu rhythmisieren suchen*] the entire psyche. As such, I am considering rhythm, I have to repeat this again, in an all-encompassing sense, namely as the overall characteristic way of the psychic occurrence or its discharge.[113]

It is in the contortion of movement and its regularity, that the psyche recognizes and realizes itself, in a sort of noise of mutually sounding elements, which give the self a general trait of a personality, which predictably is described by Lipps as 'psychic resonance':

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[113] Lipps, "Aesthetische Einfühlung", *Zeitschrift für Psychologie and Physiologie der Sinnesorgane* ('Journal for the Psychology and Physiology of the Sense Organs') 22 (1900): 444–445. Hereafter cited in text.

> …empathy [*Einfühlung*] is at the same time the empathy in sounds and sound-connections as well as the empathy in colours. Every sound, every sound-connection, every colour, or more precisely the psychic process of perception of these, has its own "rhythmicity", which becomes or can become the rhythm of the overall personality (Lipps, *Aesthetische Einfühlung*, pp. 446–447, my translation).

The weight as well as the importance of Lipps' argument, leads to a dynamically constructed psychology of primal instances and last resorts, as opposed to coming from the settled psychology of pre-inscribed enclosures. We can perhaps only now begin to comprehend what happens to ethics at around the turn of the century. Simply put, it is already part and parcel of the type of perception that the setting of the *Jahrhundertwende* is proposing to establish, which, on yet another level of its functionality, distinguishes between ethics and morality, deposing the latter in favour of the former.[114] Said in a different way, it is the particularity enclosed in the evaluative spontaneity of a situation that one might be faced with (achieved by ethical improvisation), and not the regulatory, systematically recuperated off-print of a moral code, that needs to be applied consistently and throughout, in a pre-defined amplitude that must carry the burden of judgment, culture and their social elaboration.

No wonder then, that the fin de siècle finds itself in a constant struggle that arises between the creative individuality (whether that of an artist, or just a social actor who applies to himself the standards of the avant-garde) and the ideologically sanctioned code of behaviour. It is the standard view of the entire setting, clearly identified and discussed extensively in the academic literature dealing with the question of modernity, and not at all a surprising conclusion, since the tension of individual vs. society is the most easily seen surface effect of modernity's instrumentality. But the cause of this simple and by now well exposed phenomenon lies outside of the easily visible frame of reference. This frame, through which the logic of certain constructive mechanisms escapes as it also seeps through into what are seemingly well known historical/cultural occurrences, cannot be otherwise than deceptive, since it is individuality that arises as the social paradigm of togetherness, as contradictory as this may seem.

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[114] In this gesture, the fin de siècle sets up the mechanism for the aesthetics of cruelty, which will be launched in such a spectacular fashion, a few decades later, with well known consequences. An intimation of this sort is for instance found in Manfred Wagner's essay *Egon Schiele as Representative of an Alternative Aestheticism* (in Werkner, *Egon Schiele*, ed., pp. 79–88). Wagner identifies five management concepts which are employed and reiterated by the transformative message at the turn of the 20th century. These are: crisis, longing, progress, potentiality, and deliverance. It is especially the general assertiveness of the latter two that, in Wagner's estimation, prefigure Fascism.

What punctures and punctuates the recesses of such new social formula of being together, is the principle which produces a new sort of space as form, a space "...treated by a technique that may be defined as matter and as movement".[115] This is how the everyday acquires the characteristics of an artefact, which combines the elevated loftiness of art with the greyness of the factual, into a curious connoisseurship of the most mundane reality. What one gains by this, is not only a reformulated and enlivened reality, but a different type of an expertise that imbues the empirical simplicity with a meaning that is somehow always beyond its 'load-capacity'. This meaning is nonetheless 'found' and reproduced, even though never located. Locality as the standard confinement of meaning is given up in favour of sequentially repeated events, which in their expectation for knowledgeable identification, replace the lack of placement with their own momentum. The entire psychoanalytic paradigm, for instance, operates according to such a pulse of repetition; the rhythm of a functionality that belongs nowhere but to itself, recoiling under the compulsion of a search for a frame of reference under whose auspices one could finally find a reprieve. We are speaking here of an *ambient-auditory* phenomenon, that makes itself heard as it ripples through both familiar and unfamiliar spaces, probing their dimensions like a sonar would, and hence also in the same motion, defining their own value/quality (*Eigenschaft*). Sound is in itself an expression of salient elasticity which dispenses with the standard communicative linkages as signification. The turn of the century's operative manifesto is not only attempting to proceed via the route of a general linguistic *eviction* of its evocative prowess from the abode of meaning (a prowess that it cannot locate in such setting anyway) but also and more importantly *amplify* it away from its grammatical indicatory values, thus preserving the intensity of such evocation without its standard word content. This is that silent part which Wittgenstein sets up as the 'spoiled' set that cannot belong to clear and uncompromised speech; the part that does not belong to the perspective as rationality but moves in the realm of invective mutuality between momentary durations of exasperation, exhaustion and respiratory blockage.

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[115] Henri Focillon, *The Life of Forms in Art*, p. 32.

Sound fulfills the function of a materiality that has its own range of experience, and the uniqueness of its own time-line; a time-line that divides from a condition that is always late in coming, but also makes indentations in the present, drawing topographical markings whose geography combines the moment of anonymity with a surprising power of expression. This anonymous expressiveness, besides being a social/cultural problem around the turn of the century in need of a resolution (whose general configuration, as we have seen in Simmel, becomes the problem of or rather the solution through the phenomenon of style) is also emblematic of Schoenberg's entire musical output. It finds its identifying mark in the pillar of stability that in the popular lexicon burrows its way into the fold of 'normality' or the mundane under the sign of *expectation*; a stability whose attractiveness lies precisely in the fact that there is no exacting price to pay for that which eventually comes because expectation, in the moment of its purity, is only a calculus of potentials and possibilities which, at a later date, can be confirmed or justified away and replaced with yet another sequential beginning, like the 12-tone configuration in Schoenberg, which, by continually retracing its steps, brings with it an outline of another moment, pregnant with expectancy in its nakedness.

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Let us therefore start again, reviewing the basics. The protagonist of Schoenberg's monodrama *Erwartung*, a woman without a name (a common occurrence in most of Schoenberg's libretti, where the characters are dispossessed in this way) ends in suspension, in excess of indecision, for the last phrase is simply a stutter, which concludes, as it begins anew: "I was seeking...". This pronouncement comes after what had apparently been found – the body of a lover whom the woman, in all likelihood kills herself.[116] This body, onto which the woman literally stumbles in her progression through the woods; the body which she euphemistically encounters along the way in the form of living and constantly shifting anthropomorphism of the floral structure of the forest, is itself anticlimactic. One is under the impression, that, in the end, the body is not what was being sought, since the expected encounter seems to have been a transitory stage, a stumbling block which needed to be overcome in order that one finds a closer and more 'cosy' placement to the 'cause' of one's entangled desire and ultimately the source of one's unhappiness. This is why death was found in a gesture of a premonition almost, whose finality and ultimate word, recoils into the unpronounceable, being expressed in the process itself (the ellipses after 'I was seeking…') where one must discover a remedy, where one must still feel the hesitation of possibility in its either/or configuration. All this is presented in an especially stark manner through the sonorous quality of Schoenberg's composition, especially its concluding measures, which trail off upwards, into the misty ether of nothingness, and present us with a harmony of no resolution, even though a marked conclusion, perhaps even resignation.

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[116] For the comparison of Pappenheim's original text and Schoenberg's sparse but strategically important deletions, see Laborda, *Studien zu Schönbergs Monodram "Erwartung" op. 17*, pp. 122–141. Examining the two versions, it is clear that Schoenberg's editorial interference tones down the libretto in its realistic, clinical effect (in Schoenberg's version the question of murder is not at all obvious; neither is the physical aspect of the encounter, when the woman kisses her dead lover, and, at one point, lays herself upon him) to the benefit of its hallucinatory quality: "The whole monodrama *can* be understood as a nightmare" (Schoenberg to Ernst Legal, 14 April 1930, in *Letters*, no. 114, pp. 139–141).

To further review what had already been exposed earlier, it is a well known fact that Marie Pappenheim (as we will remember, Anna O.'s relative), given her medical background, wanted to portray the dispersing power, the ridiculousness, the trauma and the indiscretion, maybe even the loss of direction as meaning, of hysteria. Schoenberg's version scrambles the entire picture, makes the woman's condition less certain, open to interpretation, hanging in suspense of a decision as to normality and abnormality, of what is really part of the scene, and what is removed from its rationality (what is ob-scene). In this sense, Schoenberg inadvertently mimics the procedure of psychoanalytic analysis, its pendulum like swings of meaning, its resistance, as well as Freud's indecision as to the nature, adequacy and ability to nominate any disorder as simply hysterical, an opinion that, as we have seen, is already expressed in the *Studies on Hysteria*. And whereas Freud, in the end, is compelled by the medical paradigm which always holds him 'nailed' to uncompromising rationality, to arrive at a decision, Schoenberg, since he works with sound (this unbound and fleeting materiality), is much freer to remain in the contrast of blatant disregard towards any diagnosis. It is a freedom of time and the duration of description that no knowledge-inspired phenomenon has the luxury of entertaining, since this freedom is simply a moribund retardation of the structural power of perception, the point at which one runs through its entire range (just like Schoenberg's music will eventually run through all 12 tones of the chromatic scale) only, in the end, to encounter and mark the dynamics of its dissipation, after which one is compelled to begin anew.

Erwartung could be considered the archetype of not only Schoenberg's musical output, of everything that has taken place, bringing it into a new even though already pre-marked climax, as well as the premonition of everything that is still to transpire, musically and biographically. What one finds in *Erwartung* leads to a further elaboration of its sound in the 12-tone technique, and expectation is a constant and frustrated experience in Schoenberg's life (expectation for recognition, for understanding of his music, for the benefit of doubt, for purity of performances or performances at all). But above and beyond all that, expectation is and must be understood as the paradigm of modernity and its specific brand of psychology, of all the twisted lines of elaboration, their artistic and aesthetic meanderings. For it is the extricated anonymity, an anonymity which gains enough individuality to be expressive, that works in this always somewhat nebulous setting of the *Jahrhundertwende*.

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I have continually pointed towards the body, given that it is seemingly so accessible, that it gives itself over to recognition while hiding something all the time (if even its internal organs) that it is possessive of the world, inescapable, as the sign and the symbol not only of itself, but the secrets that it guards through its confines; the body in Schiele's painting, where one specimen is as good as the other, just like in the anatomy lesson, and yet, where the muteness of each exemplar morphs into a uniqueness of new materiality, which plays in all the seriousness with the molecular structure of skin and bones, and through it, with the entire frame of the world. It is Schoenberg's music, no matter in which historical reincarnation, as the early over-saturated and over-ripe romanticism, its atonal expressionist phase, its 12-tone statement of rationality and structure which anchors what previously floated on the currents of indispensable mannerism, that encompasses the expressive namelessness of the fin de siècle in its over-extended scale that spins around the vortices of the incidental/particular and the measured/common; the psychology of the body versus the overwhelming idiocy of a twisted and overarching grand definition of a *Weltanschauung* – these are the moments for whose simultaneous, side by side existence, there is no better vehicle, than Schoenberg's sound, its structure and theory.

It should not then come as a surprise to us, that Schoenberg, at one point, makes this explicit analogy; an analogy which (as we had already seen on previous occasions) is much more than just a linguistic trope. In one of his diary entries kept for about a year starting on 19 January, 1912 (Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, p. 155), we find this:

> Perhaps it will be better if I compose again now. Or: it is better. I remember writing a poem ten to twelve years ago in which I wanted to be old, unambitious and quiet. Now when I suddenly see the old possibilities of unrest again, I almost have a longing for them. Or are they still there?... But in the next few days I will certainly compose… I know where this comes from: "Spring", always my best time. I already feel things stirring in me. *In this I am almost like a plant*. It is the same every year. I have nearly always composed something in the spring (ibid., p. 173, my emphasis).

In such a manner, Schoenberg himself is thrown into the game of expectation, and of course in itself, there is nothing particularly unusual about it. But it is an expectation that produces and operates according to a higher principle of resiliency, it being the psychology of a plant, of elasticity which stands ground, rooted to one spot, but one that can take many forms and shapes, according to spatial configurations which surround it. It can also outgrow and overgrow itself, hide in the thicket, metamorphose in the gesture of camouflage, or beam with the indiscretion of aggressive individuality, like van Gogh's sunflowers. We have spoken quite a bit about it already, in our previous discussion, especially of *Jugendstil*. The important point that needs to be stressed again is the different range of materiality that becomes the principle which orders the fin de siècle perception. It is a materiality that does not simply support a psychology in its expression, but a materiality that in its archetype *is* a psychology of modern identity—the type that Freud attempts to specify and search for, but which is perhaps much more accurately derived from that element which makes art what it is—a language beyond signification. And in this way, it can hide precisely in its unveiling and revelation, like sound does. As such, it becomes a psychology of gesture and the slight of hand, a form that in its architecture mimics the structure of a ruin, since no space is more sensational, in that it stimulates perception and provokes an aesthetic reaction.

There is nothing more intriguing and at the same time irritating than a structure that masks its principle of stability and gives us the seemingly decrepit, even if beautiful, ruined self. Is this not the way modernity has always presented itself to us? Through the gesticulation of peeling paint, which makes us question the sturdiness and strength of the wall itself? Have we not approached it, since the beginning (wherever it is to be found, here the standard scholarship is as indecisive as modernity is candid about its own identity) through the always impending disaster which will not only annihilate its confines, but also us with it? And have we not continually underestimated its resilience, its will to survive, beating all odds, even if exacting a high, much too high a price for its stubborn pursuit of an identity that can make one *belong* to a functional coherence of a body, in whatever form? This is the contradiction at the heart of the modern, at the core of the turn of the century especially, the contradiction of a failure to define and stabilize, but because of such a failure, the gained ability to perpetuate and to maintain the never exhausted beginning – a beginning which is never consummated, but relentlessly pursued.

Through the feeling that one needs to begin anew, since the first attempt was perhaps nothing but a false start, or not a beginning at all but a deception, one preserves the infinite charge of reaction possibilities, like the unending and interminable Freudian analysis, or the sound of Schoenberg's music, whose form and aesthetic effect becomes *the sound of/as a ruin*. This is perhaps why (apart from the purely practical and biographical circumstances, which of course are also an expression of the environment) Schoenberg leaves so many compositions unfinished, and why many of them, as he goes further along the spectrum of sophistication and specification of his compositional technique, become progressively shorter (this is especially true of his piano music), like miniatures which condense the expanse of phenomena that are otherwise dispersed and dissipated in the comfort of their refuge. This refuge is equally refusal and acceptance, because its efficacy is best elaborated as 'taming of chance'; expectation enclosed in sound which (as Schoenberg proposes it to us) is all about the coincidental sequence of tones—the kind of chance that governs the decay of ruins, where the sequence of falling stones is unpredictable, but consequential to what follows.

The ruin is precisely a way of hiding and masking through the obvious, because the seemingly impending and accomplished end (death) is in actual fact a beginning, a transition point, the point of intersection which makes the two surfaces of stability and destruction communicate, not unlike the woman in *Erwartung* who at one point engages in a long meditation (dialogue?) with the dead body of her lover. Here we again experience a concealing that actually speaks, like Freud's patients and Schoenberg himself, not only though his music, but also literally, as when he writes to Alma Mahler-Werfel:

> ...If I am to be honest and say something about my works (which I do not willingly, since I actually write them in order to conceal myself thoroughly behind them, so that I will not be seen), it could be only this: it is not meant symbolically, but only envisioned and felt. Not thought at all... It meant something to my emotions as I write it down... I don't want to be understood; I want to express myself – but hope that I will be misunderstood. It would be terrible to me if I were transparent to people.[117]

Are ruins not expressions of a misunderstanding *par excellence*, since we view them as something transparent and easily apprehensible, whereas they are structures in the nascent state of subtlety, which operate according to the psychological paradigm of expectation that does not know where it belongs as yet?

In 1926, Universal Edition (Schoenberg's main publisher) printed a short manuscript entitled *25 Years of New Music*. Schoenberg contributed an introductory article to the publication, in which he considers the central issue, not only to his music, but the general cultural/social fabric of the times. The topic is tonality:

> It is in fact a *question of economy*. According to my feeling for form (and I am immodest enough to allow this alone to have control of my composition) the playing of even one tonal triad will bring its own consequences and demand a certain space, which cannot be allowed inside my form. A tonal chord *arouses expectations* of what is to follow, and, working backwards, also has influence on everything that has gone before it; one can't demand that I should overthrow everything that has gone before it because a triad has by chance been introduced' (Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, p. 315, my emphasis).

The difficulty that representation of sound through tonality creates, of which the basic building block is the musical triad (a chord that consists of three tones, and which preserves a measured intervallic distance among them) lies precisely in the nature of expectation, which binds by association, instead of opening up paths of potentiality through which sound is to find its own trajectory, more or less, or at least give the impression of doing so. Schoenberg's objection to and definition of this type of expectation, is not at all different (in fact extremely close) to the argument made in the already discussed article by Kristian B. R. Aars, published in 1900 in the pages of the *Journal for the Psychology and Physiology of the Sense Organs*.

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[117] Quoted in John C. Crawford 'Die Glückliche Hand: Further Notes", *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute*, vol. IV, no. 1, 1980: 73.

Its main point of emphasis is precisely the contrast between expectation as association with an object or a future condition (which we could easily call consonance), and expectation as the resonance of potential which produces the feeling of vanishing or dissonance, of things that dissipate because the image of what they might be is not there as yet, giving us the sense of freedom from the bond of responsibility towards the always 'sticky' nature of currency as presence which must be exchanged for meaning. It is a non-binding connection, an association without commitment:

> It is certainly convenient for certain psychologists to derive expectation from associations. But associations are accomplished facts [*vollzogene Tatsachen*]. Everything is [already] contained in an association. There remains nothing to expect (Aars, *Die Erwartung*, p. 401, my translation).

Instead, expectation according to Aars rests on 'association-lines', which create a condition of experience without the pictographic element that would bind it to a specific and already derived object, and in this sense, we can say that this kind of expectation retards the certainty and clarity of the visual to the advantage of *aural resonance*, in the manner of Lipps' empathy or feeling of oneness (*Einfühlung*):

> Expressed abstractly, we can say, that expectation rests on an association between the present and the future condition of being conscious. But such association, in the time of expectation, is not factual. As soon as it is a fact, expectation is no longer there... Described through its own property, expectation is a potential for association

> [*Associationsgepräge*] … [Hence] expectation certainly does not rest on association, which always comes as a succeeding stage, or to give an illustrative example, it rests on the existence of association-lines without an image; on the same characteristics of experience, which lead towards its completion… (ibid., p. 403, my translation).

Using an analogy from *Erwartung*, we can perhaps say, somewhat counter intuitively, that the dissonance here, the dissonance as and of expectation, makes things transparent by creating wedges and lesions between notes, which consonance-dominated tonality, fills out with the glue of cohesive matter. Tonality as consonance, as agreement and one-directional tendency, from Schoenberg's perspective, is something akin to walking on a muddy path of clearly visible foot-prints, whereas Schoenberg is tirelessly searching for transparency (even though he himself does not want to be transparent, as much as we can take him at his word, that is, since a certain amount of resistance also plays a part here); a pattern of loosened comprehensibility and meaning, that does not create knowledge (just as Schoenberg does not want to be understood) but is still sensible, i.e., expressive of something, even if ultimately of its failure at expression.

This drive towards transparency is evident in Schoenberg's much discussed, innovative and unusual orchestrations; an idiosyncratic combination of instruments that make sound not simply musically but also topographically. In fact, the surface of sound which Schoenberg tries so meticulously to design, is a space that one needs to enter, almost physically, and not only experience aurally. Here we are speaking of, or more precisely, encountering, a harmony of no resolution (the most significant effect of dispensing with tonality) which 'behaves' like a ruin would, since what is inscribed in its manner of being, in its permeability and blending of clear demarcations between inside and outside, what the holes in its structure (broken windows, missing trusses and stones, pitching, leaning walls) punctuate, is the removal of the regulatory system of firmly elaborated enclosures. The ruin is a structure suspended in the transitory space of things not carried out to their rational completion; ruins stand as litho-graphs, as monuments whose materiality is permeated by light, by elements which do not belong to its fully functional self of an abode or a dwelling. Here, vision is not equivalent to seeing, but a way of juxtaposing elements that do not obviously go together.

We are once again speaking about this precariousness of balance, which measures out the practice of the everyday, in a skewed scale; a scale which, as a measuring device, conceptually morphs with the thing that it is supposed to approach objectively, thus releasing out of itself a psychology of approach and distance; a functionality of belonging which identifies itself in reverse, by the consciousness of where it is not, as yet, and perhaps where it cannot be, if survival is still desired. For how does one enter a ruin? And how can we functionally describe such crossing-over into a space whose threshold (this indispensable marker of an entry-way, a door that leads inside) has, quite possibly, been removed? There is then an art of the ruin, or from another angle an elementary, archetypical seed of an artistic drive, or maybe even what is expressed here is the fact that all art is a way of living the ruin. In any case, it is Simmel who makes a similar argument; an argument in defence or appreciation of what ruins give of themselves to us.

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Simmel's 1911 essay on the ruin (which we have already introduced in Chapter 13), encompasses the world in the effervescence of the floral, where nature and the technological production of forms (architectural design activity) fall into another range of apprehension, developing the sort of materiality that we are continually encountering as the forming mantra of modernity – the hybrid materiality of dissipation; the physicality under stress of metamorphosis and change of state, of rust and grime; of pressure points and ek-stasis.

Simmel speaks of the art of building, of the architecturally produced object as a space that encloses and expresses the essence of modern cultural forces. In this, as we have learned by now, he is not alone. Otto Wagner, of course uses similar language, the type of symbolic grammar of universal significations, which, the structure of a building as work of art, and not merely engineered collaboration of physical forces, brings together into an expressive pitch. The tradition of this kind of view had been relatively long established, even before the threshold of the fin de siècle; it is for instance already found in John Ruskin,[118] as it is the logical conclusion and extension of Richard Wagner's *Gasamtkunstwerk*, which erases the individuality of particular modes of art (such as music) in favour of a combined, unified experience, which works its way towards expression, through a structure, that brings all the sensory forces together into the intensity of one space.[119]

The uniqueness of Simmel's approach, which brings an inescapable cultural charge into the blindness of modernity, lies in the specific topography of the surface on whose premises some sort of unification and 'harmony' are to be accomplished. This is where we are wedged into this constantly inexhaustible contradiction between cohesion and dissipation, a sort of harmony that stabilizes as it runs the course of its own expiation. Hence, after once again reiterating that only the art of building (*Baukunst*) allows for the strange accounting and balancing of the loftiness of spirit and the gravity-laden materiality, Simmel proposes to name the structure that allows access to the arithmetic of such an accounting procedure, thus identifying the ruin in its forbearance and intimacy:

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[118] Already in 1849, Ruskin writes: "...I believe architecture must be the beginning of arts, and that the others must follow her in time and order" (*The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, p. 185).

[119] Wagner thus anticipates the concept of 'multi-media' by 130 years or so.

> The ruin of a structure means that into what is lost and decayed in the work of art, enter other forces and forms, the ones that stem from nature, and hence out of the realm, which still lives in art, but at the same time, out of a realm which already lives in nature, there arises a new totality… (Simmel, *Die Ruine*, p. 138–139, my translation).

The ruin is a hybrid space, which arises out of movement and change of condition; and in this sense, it is accidental but always in the same way that death presents an accident, i.e., its particular circumstances are a matter of chance, but its general occurrence is a *fait accompli* from the start. Such presence of fulfillment through lines of association that are nonetheless open to investigation removes one from the crushing teleological certainty of the accomplished and fulfilled self. By opening the psychological vision of intimacy, not through the script of absolute and tragic exposure to knowledge (what, for instance, the notion of romantic love represents, under which, the 19th century had laboured so much) but on the contrary, through the muteness and (to a certain degree) the retardation of sensuality that comes together in a 'pre-packaged deal' as *anonymity*, the individuality is stirred and spurred into an encounter with places that lie removed from immediacy. Is not the Freudian paradigm precisely an expression of such anonymous forces, or better yet, the plateau of such an anonymity on which the drama of knowledge plays itself out? It is a way of losing face, of chipping away at the façade; a removal of stringent and grotesquely obvious identifying marks which liberates an identity under demolition, scrambles the categories of past and future, making them deranged and bloated in the confines of a present, whose lore needs nothing more but a moment of contemplation without satisfying the apparition of constantly threatening utility. Simmel characterizes such strange, skewed perception as 'positive passivity', the same sort of power of moderation/mediation that Freud's patients exhibit or are encouraged to do so.

For could it not be said, that all these psychologically festooned personalities entering the strictly choreographed scenery of Berggasse 19, all these years, in lines of elaborate sequences (like Schoenberg's 12-tones) were precisely ruins; the ruins of the past in the present which now stood in the configuration of the analytical situation like post-cards picturing tourist attractions in the form of dilapidated monuments? Not to mention the fact, that they also entered a sort of debris field, in the shape of Freud's consulting room, laden and overburdened with ancient artefacts. In a manner of speaking, we can say, that entering Freud's space, one was forced to enter a ruin, or even more specifically, something like an archaeological dig – a premonition of and a direction for what one is supposed to do with one's own psyche, i.e., dig it up from the recesses of time immemorial but via the psychoanalytic session, also commemorate it. The ruin here becomes a sort of stimulus and exaltation of time in its construction, a point of arousal (to and towards a discourse, as it is experienced in psychoanalysis) and transference (so crucial to Freudian analysis); of giving the power of expression to what is otherwise inexpressible, because it lies somewhere between the 'what is not yet' and 'what is no more', as Simmel points out, which mimics the configuration of expectation.

This type of mysterious harmony (Simmel), is derived from the molecular readjustment of the forces at play, that find themselves enclosed in ruins, or; "Said in a different way, it is the excitement of the ruin, that here the man-made work, in the end, will be experienced as a product of nature" (Simmel, *Die Ruine*, p. 140, my translation). And through this level of engagement with things, we are moving again into the plant-ontology, where effluence is the plasticity in stasis, as something rooted but also easily transplanted; an experiment, which, as August Strindberg points out, "…proves nothing and yet … shows so much" (Strindberg, *The Sunflower*, p. 180).[120] The experiment in question is the anthropomorphic quality of the sunflower:

> With a shaving knife cut the pith of a sunflower into slices. Observe the miniature that appears in white on gold, and you will see a man's image, stylised like the image on a pre-Grecian coin, or if you like, the head of a Mexican (Peruvian) statue (ibid., p. 180).

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[120] August Strindberg, "The Sunflower", in *Selected Essays by Strindberg*, pp. 178–180. Hereafter cited in text.

15. Anatomical Reality?

Strindberg's essay on the sunflower, written in 1897, speaks to the philosophical and historical/cultural inscriptions of fin de siècle. Writer, mystic, self-taught scientist, and in general an aesthetic/artistic catalyst who foments in the incessant commentary on the nature of things and their positioning in the historical/evolutionary time-frame, August Strindberg extends definitions of materiality into avenues of improbability but an uncomfortable conviction, and in the end (especially from the perspective of future scientific developments) strangely amusing correctness.[121]

He is a modern day alchemist, who pursues chemical experimentation, abstractly and empirically, in an effort to create a new range of empiricism, the modern version of the alchemist's obsession with gold. It is in the nature of the sunflower, where he finds the miniature panorama of all the universal and cultural forces – an interesting fact, given the contemporary and historical importance of Van Gogh's *Sunflowers*, and their cultural position, especially in the fin de siècle Vienna, as one of the stimuli that initiate the movement of Expressionism.[122] From the perspective of a ruin, it is the psychology of expectation and possibility, which interlaces the gap between plant-life and human life, elevating them to the strata of a new bio-mass.

We are presented here with the case of yet another clear formulation of the improbable, functional-self. For, just as he finds man in the sunflower, one can also glimpse the latter in the physical, cellular make-up of the human body, especially the eye:

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[121] For an excellent discussion of Strindberg's artistic activity, intermixed with biography and general cultural commentary on the times, see Michael Robinson, "Introduction", in *Selected Essays by Strindberg*, pp. 1–21.

[122] See Almust Krapf-Weiler, "The Response of Early Viennese Expressionism to Vincent van Gogh", in Patrick Werkner, ed., *Egon Schiele*, pp. 31–50.

> And if one makes a cross-section through the eye's cornea, there is a sunflower. When packed with seeds, the sunflower's thalamus presents a honeycomb with cells, with the seeds resembling bee larvae; but in its entirety it also resembles an insect's eye. In a rough sketch the hermaphrodite inner flowers of the sunflower resemble the rods of the retina (Strindberg, *The Sunflower*, p. 180).

The essay, as a subtitle, espouses the following formula or equation of the mechanics that permeates reality: Analogies=Correspondences=Harmonies. It ends with the following formulation: "We have seen similarities everywhere, for the simple reason that similarities and correspondences are to be found everywhere, and those who say that they believe in the unity of matter—and the spirit—agree with us! Isn't that so?" (ibid., p. 180). Analogies here become documents or empirical indicators of harmonies and correspondences, whose importance I have been attempting to show and 'prove' almost from the beginning of this narrative. In Simmel, as we have seen, such unity is extrapolated through the image and the physical dimensions of a ruin.

If correspondences are to be found everywhere, if one only looks at things through the correct angle of refraction, then Schoenberg's music is the prime exponent of such 'found correspondences' precisely there, where they are not supposed to be present. Making the sound thus produced not representational of a pre-ordered and pre-ordained center (like the one in painterly perspective or tonality resting on the key) but throwing it into a surprise of an analogy or a metaphor – a sound that stands for itself, but in such a stance, elaborates its own resonance through the harmony of parallels, is something that in the process of affective action, undermines its certainty but, in this gesture, achieves the honesty of some type of admission, whether it is admission in the manner of entering (admittance) or an admission of things previously unacknowledged (the ultimate, and desired result of the psychoanalytic session).

It is a well known fact that Schoenberg was very much influenced by Strindberg. His library contained Strindberg's complete works and at one point, Schoenberg seriously considered setting one of Strindberg's plays to music, a project that in the end had to fall on deaf ears, due to the untimely death of the author.[123] One could speculate as to the attraction of Strindberg's idiosyncratic philosophy of experimental empiricism, to Schoenberg's own personality. The most obvious explanation that comes to mind would simply be the fact that Strindberg's intensity, his drive towards the concentration of all the explanatory forces in the most insignificant phenomena (or seemingly insignificant) match Schoenberg's personality in excess, since music or sound are not simply technical issues of artistic production, but on a much more elevated level, they represent the universe under threat and in constant need of rescue through the most precise, momentary elaboration.[124]

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A self who operationalizes life into a technique of approach, into an unspecified *functionality of belonging* – a formulation which in itself is an elaboration and an extension of *the psychology of expectation*, is developed thematically through the idea of deranged sensations, which Strindberg makes the topic of another one of his short essays.

The work, written in 1894/1895 under the title of 'Sensations Détraquées' and published in the Parisian literary magazine *Le Figaro littéraire*, carries with it several connotations. 'Deranged Sensations', as the English translation renders the phrase, specifies in both English and French a state close to or basically at the point of madness, of being out of touch with reality, distorting the grace of its welcoming stability. This standard signification, as we learn not only from Strindberg's essay, but also from the meaning that 'sensations détraquées' are endowed with in the fin de siècle Paris, is completely turned around. In the literary circles of the time, 'deranged sensations' was a label meant to specify the condition of extreme creative sensitivity, intellectual prowess and refinement; a characteristic that became the core of an artistic personality, which one is to possess not only on those irregular occasions when the creative frenzy takes over, but all the time, as part of one's basic constitution and character. For Strindberg this condition of distraction and derangement which sees the world differently from what is allowed one through the standard sensory apparatus, takes on another, even more significant meaning, for it is a state that is needed for the future, its artistic and existential acumen. Writing in 1894, Strindberg says in a letter to a friend:

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[123] H. H. Stuckenschmidt in *Schoenberg, His Life, World and Work*, writes: "Strindberg was sixty-three on 22 January. His early death in May 1912 deprived Schoenberg of the hope of sending proposals for working together with the man whom he admired" (p. 239).

[124] H. H. Stuckenschmidt emphasizes the impact of Strindberg on the creative development of the composer. In 1909 "[o]n the blank side of a letter from Hermann Bahr Schoenberg doodled, as he often did, a shape which represented nothing and next to it in large letters the two names AUGUST STRINDBERG – ARNOLD SCHOENBERG" (ibid., p. 233). He also points out the similar 'spiritual' development that the two artists underwent, as well as the impact of Strindberg's *Jacob Wrestling*, which stimulated the composer for years. The connection to Schoenberg's later opera *the Jacob's Ladder*, is inescapable. For more detail see Stuckenschmidt, pp. 233–239.

> Some time ago I sent you an article from *Le Figaro*: "Sensations détraquées", in which I tried, in a favourable mood I'd worked up, to anticipate the capacities of a future, more highly developed mental life, which we still lack, and which I can only conjure up momentarily – before falling back, exhausted by the effort, into my old frame of mind...[125]

In another comment about this short work, which we will consider in more detail shortly, Strindberg expresses that the opening section of the essay was a 'symbolic, détraquistic compromise between science, poetry, and madness'.[126] But it is the above formulation, about the anticipation of future psychological capacities, which is especially interesting, since the future Strindberg identifies, is not really that far off, and in fact, already present, if even through his own personality. This is the future which in about a decade or less, will be firmly connected to and identified with phenomena such as psycho-analysis and Schoenberg's theory and practice of sound, among others.

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[125] *Selected Essays by August Strindberg*, Michael Robinson, ed., p. 250, notes.

[126] Ibid., p. 250, notes.

Strindberg's text on 'deranged sensations' describes a journey from Austria to France, and then a sojourn in a friend's villa at the town of Versailles. It is an image of distances and strange re-orchestration of familiar places; an experience of a curious stasis, a disjuncture between movement and confinement:

> For all forty-eight hours I have sat like a prisoner in a railway carriage, forced to breath in the carbon dioxide and nitrogen of people I do not know. To begin with I simply loathed them, for they disturbed me, these creatures who made me learn their features and compelled me, forcibly, to listen to their conversation, which agitated my mind...And from the bottom of my heart I cursed my companions, shut up in the same box as I was. But when tiredness got the better of them, and they fell silent, their faces assumed such sorrowful expressions that I ended up feeling sorry for them. Uprooted from their normal sphere, from their loved ones and from their habits, they filled me with compassion. A general feeling of discomfort settled upon this mean and trying intercourse in the railway compartment... and when night had fallen, when these poor people had gone to asleep [sic], with their unwashed hands pressed together upon their stomachs and their pale, sweat-drenched faces bent down over their breasts, our compartment resembled a battlefield strewn with corpses and the scattered remains of human limbs. Sleep brings no feelings of happiness, and our torture chamber resounds with sighs, sighs from creatures who, after millions of years of civilisation, have relapsed into an animal or savage state, and dream of green pastures, or perhaps also of a good murder, rape or incest![127]

The violence of the passage, its anatomical graphic nature, should not be too much of a surprise to us, given what we have already learned about the fin de siècle modernity. For it not only anticipates the great 'theatre of cruelty' (Artaud),[128] the social version of an anatomy lesson in the form of the two world wars, but (what is of continual importance for us, as the bedrock on which we attempt to stand) once again expresses and accentuates the type of logic that modernity hides within itself, and according to which *it expects something of itself*. It is a lesson in dissection and fragmentation, an aesthetics of disappearance which makes ruins out of clearly demarcated enclosures, whether these are material objects, matters of knowledge or physical bodies. This is the only way, in which, the necessity (given the erosion of religion, one of modernity's emblematic conditions) of being expectant of something at all, can be created. And since the expectation for a pre-inscribed and pre-situated fulfillment cannot be counted on, now, almost instinctively the future and its chance-governed potentiality, is attached to the most immediate presence, shifting the latter into a vacuum of sorts that empties itself out, dissolving qualities that are undesirable while at the same time, filling the present with other substances, that can once again breath life into it.

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[127] Strindberg, "Deranged Sensations", in *Selected Essays*, pp. 122–123. Hereafter cited in text.

[128] By 1932, Antonin Artaud is able to write: "Without an element of cruelty at the foundations of every spectacle, the theater is not possible. In the state of degeneracy, in which we live, it is through the skin that metaphysics will be made to reenter our minds" (Artaud, *Theater of Cruelty*, in Caws, p. 459).

After the strenuous train journey, Strindberg finally arrives at Versailles, and feels emotionally liberated, gleaning the images of the present and the past into a new collection of facts. Here we are necessarily speaking of the quite draining experience of transposition, where closeness and remoteness are felt together, all at once, in the nonchalance of disinterestedness: "Even the most deeply rooted of my emotional ties has relinquished its grip and been replaced by a liberating indifference" (Strindberg, *Deranged Sensations*, p. 123). It is only such indifference that can define the contours of a fresh encounter with places already familiar:

> With my sight sharpened by anger I measure the distance and fancy I can distinguish some busts on the central section of the building … seen from the front … I take out my map of Versailles, calculate the distance once again, and find that I have only 500 meters to go to reach the chateau, since the entire length of the avenue does not exceed 1000 meters. Surprised by this simple fact, I explain the whole business to myself as follows: 'the perspective changes as I stride along; at the same time, the optic angle grows larger, and this infernal play of invisible lines confuses my mind, where the irradiating rays of the enchanted castle imprint themselves' (ibid., p. 124).

The experience becomes one of overburdened perspective and rationality, where the linear approach to the *space as a limit* is divested and given up in favour of *space as environment*. This is how Henri Focillon explains the divergent identity of such spaces:

> Space as limit not only moderates the proliferation of relief, the excesses of projection, the disorder of volumes (which it tends to block into a single mass), but also strongly affects the modeling. It restrains its undulations and disturbances; it suggests the modeling itself merely by an accent, by a slight movement that does not break the continuity of planes… However, space as environment, exactly as it delights in the scattering of volumes, in the interplay of voids, in sudden and unexpected perforations, so does it, in the modeling, welcome those multiple, tumbled planes that rend the light asunder (Focillon, *The Life of Forms*, p. 79).

Using the already established 'conceptual dictionary', we see that it is precisely ruins that operate according to and furthermore establish such environmental spaces, where light instead of being controlled as carefully planned encounters (especially through windows) is now rendered asunder, since it slips by, slithers past otherwise impermeable surfaces, to be only recaptured in a different form—the form of its own dissipation in the time that it takes for it to scatter. If extensive spaces, or spaces as environment break apart the homogeneity and continuity of planes and surfaces, then one should also easily surmise that the entire mass of sound, the way we find it in Schoenberg's compositions, in their entire range, is all about the scattering of volumes and the interplay of voids, of sudden perforations that stretch and split apart the homogeneity of the tonal space and its limits. The Freudian psychic apparatus, its entire scheme, is also such an environmental space; a membrane that resonates through forms and formulas of the logic of encounter between the mind and whatever surrounds it, liberating things out of their old enclosures and thus formulating a psychology that is space, as much as it is a theory or a science.

Strindberg becomes a virtuoso in perpetuating, performing and composing the tensions that lead to such an elementary imbalance, a carnage of perceptions that extends from the railway carriage, to the immaculate space of the Versailles gardens with its palace:

> Certainly, I want to reach my goal, the palace, but at the same time I want to defy that superior force. My brain divides into two parts and joins battle with itself, and I expect to see half my body stroll across the Place d'Armes while the other half remains by the post. I seek in vain to connect the two parts of the machine and strive to discover a self which stands above my self… (Strindberg, *Deranged Sensations*, p. 125).

The transfiguration of space is also accomplished musically, by piercing the anatomy of volumes that are out of range:

> …I become aware that the Cour de Marbre comprises the auditory canal of a huge ear, the auricle of which is formed by the wings of the building. Captivated by this new fantasy and happy to have come upon this bizarre idea, that I am like a flea in a giant's ear, I listen pressed against the wall… What a surprise!... I can hear!... For it is Paris that I can hear murmuring along this chain of hills, which stretches from Courbevoie to Sceaux and spreads out in a semicircle where the principal focus is Versailles, and the auditory canal is the Sèvres vally (ibid., p. 127).

The experience, whose 'marksmanship' forces Strindberg to ask if he is 'out of kilter', since he was born when people, among other things, had six-volume novels to read, or if he is 'changing skin' due to the nerves that are undergoing evolutionary crisis, also repeats itself in the most intimate of spaces, the bedroom:

> …for some reason, that I cannot fathom, my bed today does not afford me the rest I desire. Uneasy, I get up and take down my guitar in order to seek out my nerves' chord. It is a habit of mine to tune my soul and the instrument to each other in this way, and when I feel depressed, I raise my soul tone by tone while tuning the pegs of the guitar. Today my nerves are in the key of D minor… (ibid., p. 128).

Just a few years later, Schoenberg will retune the nerves, his own and those of his contemporaries, eventually without a key at all, but before that takes place, his favourite mode of interaction with sound is also D-minor.[129]

It would indeed be worth while trying to trace the concept of nerves and nervousness back to its first instance, given how it is historically bound with the instance and the idea of modernity. Of course, most of the imagery and experimental proof in the course of which one attempted to derive various schematics of nerve-networks, comes from anatomy and physiology, but by the time of Strindberg and further on, the nerves stand not only in signification of a physiological stimulus-response, but euphemistically propound to elevate the psychology of modernity to a general social/cultural condition. The frayed nerves, always pictured in diagrams as if the human body was overgrown from the inside by a system of roots and branches, almost throw back the shape and the image of humanity down the evolutionary scale, closer to the condition of the plant-world, where environmental sensitivity, fragility and instability, and quite miniscule environmental changes, combine and threaten to wipe out the entire habitat – a behaviour that is very much unlike the evolution-inspired concept of adaptability and resilience. Strindberg falls victim to this recidivism of nervousness, in its plant like-character:

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[129] See H. H. Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, p. 91.

> I contemplate a gigantic pine in front of me… Like an animal which has come into being through crossbreeding between a polyp, an insect, a snake and a fish, the pine towers up into the heights. Its elongated body, all covered in scales, encloses the circulatory and lymphatic system… The pine sinks its open belly down into the earth, its outer and inner intestines secreting digestive juices over its food before it sucks it up, just as the fly does… My pine is a living being, a large animal that eats, digests, grows and loves… He loves this pine. Hence he has nerves! Where?... And the nerves?—They exist everywhere!... Enough of this! He feels, my pine… (Strindberg, *Deranged Sensations*, p. 133).

Such event and its experimental character (a distinction which is somewhat of a misnomer, since for Strindberg all phenomena, worthy of the name, are really experiments in progress) is an instance of space as environment; a space that had lost and forgotten its perimeter, to be now governed by chance, or at least the kind of expectation that chance 'reined-in' inadvertently brings with it.

In another short essay, *The New Arts! or The Role of Chance in Artistic Creation* (1894),[130] as the title already suggests, Strindberg uses the dynamic concept of chance, as well as the mechanics of retuning, thus coming back to the state of coherence as transgression which erases symmetry. At stake is individuality as a mode perception, illustrated with a musical example:

> They say that the Malays make holes in the bamboo stems that grow in their forests. When the wind comes the savages lie on the ground and listen to symphonies performed by these gigantic Aeolian harps. The strange thing is that each man hears his own melody and harmony, just as the wind blows (Strindberg, *The New Arts!*, p. 103).

Strindberg is after "this natural art, where the artist works in the same capricious way as nature, without specific aim" (ibid., p. 103), or in other words, he is attempting to effectuate the ruin, without calling it such. The artistic expression of this capricious creation, a production that preserves the decrepit character of possibilities gone awry, is found in and through sound:

> I sought a melody for a one-acter [sic] of mine called *Simoom*, which is set in Arabia. To that end, I tuned my guitar at random, loosening the screws haphazardly, until I found a chord that struck me as something extremely bizarre, though without overstepping the bounds of beauty… Here is my melody, as it was composed by chance: G, C#, G#, B, E (ibid., p. 104).

Without overestimating the coincidental correspondence, but also not dismissing it, we should only point out that a few years later, Schoenberg too will base his music on accidental series and combination of pitches whose sequence will comprise a sort of genetic code, meant to represent the idea of sound in contortion, its own hard won and painfully acquired uniqueness. The impulse behind Schoenberg's sound-compositions remains the same throughout: it is a drive that breaks open the relationship between accommodation to and accordance with the complacency of limits which reify the senses into pre-loaded and ideologically charged instruments. This is how time is gained to construct extensions of expectation and chance, which stamp the functionality of a ruin and therefore distorted, uncomfortable but intimate feeling of belonging, into sound.

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[130] In Strindberg, *Selected Essays*, pp. 103–105. Hereafter cited in text.

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Given the recent intellectual fashion of speaking about deconstruction, it would be appropriate to describe the entire fin de siècle movement as such deconstructive engineering, a flesh-eating disease, where decomposition becomes the principle of encounter after the exhaustion of totalizing philosophies (à la Hegel) that had attempted to erect the great systems of thought and knowledge, by building and adding the plateaus of existence together into the recesses of dialectical and metaphysical infinity.

It is on the opposite side of the ledger where one can witness the silhouette of 'our' modernity, in which we seek placement. Such placement runs a parallel course with the beginnings of ultra-modern science, looking into incessantly smaller particles of matter, in its search for the hiding place of the universal formula. In the early teens of the 20th century, it was physics which eventually split the atom. Today biology is catching up, fragmenting the human figure into ribbons of the genetic code.

At around the turn of the century, the paradigm of fragmentation takes hold in the most radical manner. It is a historical and cultural version of a child's play whose 'innocence' tears off the wings of a butterfly to satisfy his curiosity. This is why childhood as psychology and the forming experience takes on such an importance, especially in psychoanalysis. But perhaps the most enduring and visible effect of this paradigm of fragmentation, is the category of individuality, through which everything else is to be apprehended and which holds us almost hostage at the present, in our socio-cultural environment. It is the artist who at first becomes the archetype of this individuality that is responsible for itself and to itself, that stands apart from the general configuration of things, but at the same time, by creating unavoidable contrast and conflict with it, influences it almost without discrimination. It is precisely in art, especially literature, in the many exasperating calls for yet another renewal, that the string of anatomical lessons is clearly identifiable. Strindberg too, makes no qualms about it, by entitling two collections of his essays *vivisections—Vivisections* (1887) and *Vivisections II* (1894). The lesson in anatomy as accessibility to reality, of course, is not a new phenomenon—it had been practiced in various forms for centuries. What is new, is the application of its principles, in the most literal way, to phenomena that according to a common-sense evaluation, should be unaffected by it. If we go a little further back in time, to around the middle of the 19th century, we are faced with a glowing example of such an attitude, in the form of Zola's experimental novel (1880).

In a series of essays on the topic,[131] curiously enough first published in Russia, Zola proposes to adapt literature to the medical paradigm, almost piece meal. As his blueprint, he takes Claude Bernard's 'Introduction to the Practice of Experimental Medicine':

> I really only need to adapt, for the experimental method has been established with strength and marvellous clearness by Claude Bernard in his "Introduction à l'Étude de la Médecine Experimentale". This work, by a savant whose authority is unquestioned, will serve me as a solid foundation (Zola, *Experimental Novel*, p. 1).[132]

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[131] Émile Zola, *The Experimental Novel and Other Essays*. Hereafter cited in text.

[132] Bernard elevates vivisection to the centre piece of his medical method: "If we wish to attain the exact conditions of vital manifestations in men and animals, we must seek them not in the exterior cosmic environment, but rather in the organic internal environment…But how can the interior environment of complex organisms such as men and the higher animals be known, if not by descending to them, in a sense, and penetrating them through experimentations applied to living bodies? This means that in order to analyze the phenomena of life, it is necessary to penetrate living organism with the help of vivisectional procedures" (Bernard, "Médecine Experimentale", quoted in Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria*, p. 20).

Just how literal this criss-crossing of paradigms is, can be surmised from a sentence only a few lines later: "It will often be but necessary for me to replace the word 'doctor', by the word 'novelist'" (ibid., pp. 1–2). Zola's justification for this state of affairs and 'technical' possibilities; for his ability to turn this literal transplantation into the literary encounter *as* the novel, rests on the conclusion that "...medicine, in the eyes of a great number of people, is still an art, as is the novel" (ibid., p. 2). And as we already know, these two moments of medicine and the novel, will come together in a spectacular fashion in psychoanalysis, especially through the personality and practice of its author.

Having set out the problematic in this way, in the remainder of the text, Zola painstakingly applies Bernard's method to the practice of the novel, emphasizing certain parts. Of special thematic interest here, is this condensed paraphrase of Bernard's treatise, which, as one of its major methodological considerations, also discusses vivisection:

> [Bernard] then treats of practical experiments [sic] on living beings, of vivisection, of the preparatory anatomical conditions, of the choice of animals, of the use of calculation in the study of phenomena, and lastly of the physiologist's laboratory (ibid., p. 4).

It is this type of a laboratory as literature, in which vivisections and character experiments can be conducted, that Zola hopes to establish, and convince others that this is the only formula for a literary engagement with reality. In this form:

> ...science enters into the domain of us novelists, who are to-day the analyzers of man, in his individual and social relations. We are continuing, by our observations and experiments, the work of the physiologist, who has continued that of the physicist and the chemist (ibid., p. 17).

At the turn of the century, psychoanalysis will take up this position of the science which makes the analysis of man into the thematic definition of contemporary culture and history, both immediate and primordial. In this, it heeds Zola's call for operating not on skin and bones, but the passions and the intellect of man:

> In one word, we should operate on the characters, the passions, on the human and social data, in the same way that the chemist and the physicist operate on inanimate beings, and as the physiologist operates on living beings (ibid., p. 18).

Freud himself, besides entitling one of his essays *Dissection of Personality*, compares the work of the analyst to that of a surgeon, as we have seen, and we can extend 'this operative imperative' further by saying that Schoenberg performs a similar sort of procedure on sound and in sound, stripping it of its outer shell, its skin in form of tonality, thus liberating the descriptive possibility of capturing human passion, in the most directly accessible and unembellished manner. Any of his nameless operatic characters can serve as an instance of this operation, especially the woman protagonist in *Erwartung*. This is also the treatment that Strindberg applies to himself, almost fanatically and *ad nauseam*. Characteristically, all this can only transpire by blending the senses, philosophies, paradigms and scientific methodologies, although physiology takes precedence here, since ultimately it is the human body that has to give up its confines to the judgment of our observations:

> If the territory of the experimental doctor is the body of man, as shown in the phenomena of his different organs both in their normal and pathological condition, our territory is equally the body of man, as shown by his sensory and cerebral phenomena, both in their normal and pathological condition (ibid., p. 32).

In this sense, the experimental novel is simply a completion of physiology on the social and cultural scale:

> …the experimental novel is a consequence of the scientific evolution of the century; it continues and completes physiology, which itself leans for support on chemistry and medicine; it substitutes for the study of the abstract and the metaphysical man the study of the natural man, governed by physical and chemical laws, and modified by the influences of his surroundings; it is in one word the literature of our scientific age, as the classical and romantic literature corresponded to a scholastic and theological age (ibid., p. 23).

We are speaking here of knowledge, which in the manner of Simmel's ruin "…must modify nature, without departing from nature… (ibid., p. 11),[133] just like Schoenberg's music modifies sound, without departing from its natural principles of overtone resonance.

All this fits quite neatly into an interesting line of philosophical development that reacts against metaphysical thought (Zola keeps harping against the idealist writers/novelists in his essay) by recuperating and re-establishing the logic of materiality as the standard by which all reality is to be approached, a trend that comes to a very high pitch in architecture, as we have seen. In one word, what is being proposed more and more, from around the middle of the 19th century, and what comes into its own at the turn of the century, is an *extraction of materiality*, which at the same time as it attempts to set itself up as the pinnacle of existence, destabilizes its own form, since it now expects of itself more than any physical/material phenomenon is in the habit of giving. Experimentation in Zola, just like the psyche in psychoanalysis or the 12-tone sound later, become such probationary, material phenomena which are continually wont of providing most far-reaching formulas for the 'true' and the 'real'.[134] Zola, once again, is unequivocal in this assessment:

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[133] To repeat, Simmel says in his essay on the ruin that it is the stimulus of the ruin for a work of man to be experienced like the work of nature (Simmel, *Die Ruine*, p. 140).

[134] Schoenberg's practical, design activities from his 'Coalition Chess' to the musical typewriter (which he patented in 1909, the same year *Erwartung* was written) are well known. But their constant and uninterrupted presence throughout Schoenberg's life, points towards a more fundamental condition, which Stuckenschmidt describes in the following manner: "Respect for material! Respect for craftsmanship. Schoenberg had had these feelings from his youth onwards. He loved to work with leather, canvas, paper and string… As a carpenter he made book-shelves, tables, chairs… He cut curtains from material, stretched them on a wooden frame and painted them. He tinkered and sketched… His interpretation of the concept of material separates him radically from Busoni. For Schoenberg material is the note which is still unformed, for Busoni it is the unusual sound" (in *Schoenberg*, p. 230). In another exchange between the two composers, in which Busoni proposes that we admire Mozart as an innovator and seeker, but not as the forger of great musical material, Schoenberg says in contradiction "Yes!... The material which is destined

> Being obliged to make a study of man, we feel we cannot deny the efficacy of the new physiological truths. And I will add that the novelists are certainly the workers who rely at once upon the greatest number of sciences, for they treat of them all and must know them all, as the novel has become a general inquiry on nature and on man. This is why we have been led to apply to our work the experimental method as soon as this method had become the most powerful tool of investigation. We sum up investigation, we throw ourselves anew into the conquest of the ideal, employing all forms of knowledge (ibid., p. 38).

The conclusion is an inescapable one:

> The metaphysical man is dead; our whole territory is transformed by the advent of the physiological man... In short, everything is summed up in this great fact: the experimental method in letters, as in the sciences, is on the way to explain the natural phenomena, both individual and social, of which metaphysics, until now, has given only irrational and supernatural explanations (ibid., p. 54).

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Robert Musil, one of the most iridescent literary forces of the early 20th century modernism, expresses a similar sentiment of a vivisectionist, not only in his famous novel *Der Mann Ohne Eigenschaften* ('The Man Without Qualities') but also in his diaries. These start in 1898, with the 'Pages from monsieur le vivisecteur's Book of the Night'. No doubt, monsieur le vivisecteur, is Musil himself, a man who is not so much 'without qualities' (just like Ulrich, the hero of Musil's novel is not, despite the title, especially in its English translation) but whose characteristic is the ability to bind and straddle experience by a ballet-like ability to combine, almost seamlessly with the surrounding spaces, like the capacity to envelope that night only possesses:

> I live in the Polar region, for when I go to my window I see only still white surface that serve as a pedestal for the night. Around me, there is organic isolation, I rest as if under a 100m thick cover of ice. A blanket such as this, gives to the eye of one who is thus comfortably buried a certain perspective known only to him who had placed 100 meters of ice over his eye. This is how it looks from the inside looking out – and from the outside looking in? I remember a fly I once saw interned [sic] in rock crystal. Flies, for some aesthetic predisposition that I've not yet subjected to the scrutiny of the understanding, are something that offend – how shall I put it – my feeling for beauty. But

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for the shaping of timeless things, attracts it; it is worthy of honour for us. It is the material vestibule of the spirit" (ibid., p. 230).

> the one that I saw in the crystal was different. By being sealed within an alien medium it lost the detail of what one might call its "fly personality" and appeared to me only as a dark surface with delicately shaped appendages… Book of the Night! I love the night for she wears no veil; in the day, nerves are tugged to and fro till they go blind but, at night, beasts of prey take one in a stranglehold and the life of the nerves recovers from the anaesthetic of the day and unfolds within; a new sensation of self emerges that is like stepping suddenly in front of a mirror that has not received a single ray of light for days and, drinking in greedily, holds out one's own face… Recently I invented a very fine name for myself: "monsieur le vivisecteur"… "Monsieur le vivisecteur"—that's who I am! My life: the wanderings and adventures of a vivisectionist of souls at the beginning of the twentieth century! What is m.l.v.? Perhaps he is typical of the human being to come…[135]

The type of experience Musil longs for and describes is none other than a certain plasticity of the ego, its neutral energy (as Freud designates it) that provides what no other phenomenon can – a way of operating on experience itself through the process of melding with it. We are speaking here of empiricism as an overburdened materiality, which feels responsible for all of reality, since everything must take and find place in it, including the most intimate and unique encounters, but also an experience which must happen upon the kernels and rivets that are not obvious, which are not simply there for the taking.

The question, then, immediately becomes this: how can one find something of one's own, in the general nature of the increasingly despondent materiality? And the corollary is: how can one claim ownership of anything at all, especially one's uniqueness, which is so necessary to bolster and fulfill the requirements of the modern conception of individuality, when everything is a common social property, given its massive scale, which, by its own admission, has the tendency to eliminate the always necessary boundaries, distances and hence differences?

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[135] Robert Musil, *Diaries*, pp. 2–3, translation modified.

This is precisely the apex point at which, for instance, both Simmel and Benjamin find themselves, well into the 20th century. It is as well the wave on whose crest both Freud and Schoenberg float.

16. An Interlude – The Auditory Cleft

The sentiment of irresistible stability that only the unknown can provide is not new, of course. It is the motivating force behind religious thought, its very often recondite mimicry which takes hold as a religion becomes comfortable in its own skin. One of the most famous expressions of how man relates and had related to the primary condition of his existence, is Nietzsche's argument in his first book *The Birth of Tragedy*,[136] which informs not only everything that is to come from his pen in the subsequent years, but more significantly presages the type of man, that the fin de siècle experiences. In this, Nietzsche is the oracle of modernity, not only today, but especially at the turn of the century, where he and his philosophy are elevated into the strata of the prophetic.[137]

The theoretically savvy argument in *The Birth of the Tragedy*, places the contemporary civilization in direct comparison to and a line of descent from the Greek antiquity. Nietzsche sees in this historical image, especially the story of how the brief moment of Greek tragedy arose and then very quickly fell into oblivion (to be replaced by Socratic/scientific optimism) a parallel track on whose glistening rails the modern culture finds its prolific infatuation with itself. But he also glimpses the possibility of a future development, a vector of evolutionary-cultural progression that would take human civilization back to the tragic man who listens, replacing the illusion the theoretical subject promulgates, by losing his myth-making powers to the uncontested life of truth and beauty. Nietzsche is trying to look at reality and its dominant scientific mode through the perspective of an artist, who is and lives the art in life (*The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 19). For it is art that ultimately provides the network of generative tissues which span the phenomenal world.

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[136] The full original title runs *The Birth of the Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music*. In later editions, this title page became secondary, appearing after a section entitled "Attempt at Self-Criticism" and the new title page *The Birth of the Tragedy Or: Hellenism and Pessimism*. Hereafter cited in text.

[137] On the importance of Nietzsche to the intellectual circles in Vienna, see Michael Huter "Body as Metaphor: Aspects of the Critique and Crisis of Language at the Turn of the Century with Reference to Egon Schiele", in Patrick Werker, ed., *Egon Schiele, Art, Sexuality, and Viennese Modernism*, pp. 119–129.

If the world is a web of entanglements and communicative statements, then art is its spider. It is in this vein that Nietzsche repeats the following formulation throughout his text, a repetition of which he is aware and to which he freely admits: "In the book itself the suggestive sentence is repeated several times, that the existence of the world is justified only as an aesthetic phenomenon" (ibid., p. 22). Aesthetics here, as we might already suspect, does not mean contemplation and reverence of beauty (although this is one, historically specific aesthetic moment, the Apollinian, after Nietzsche's locution).[138] Rather, Nietzsche is concerned with the meaning of aesthetics as depth, as a force that gives energy for the creation of reality in general, a version of which will find placement later in Freud's depth-psychology and its various techniques and drives. It will especially find resonance in the already identified 'artistic drive of the ego' as neutral plasticity that, in the end, bears all the responsibility for the psychological prowess of the organism.

The schema of Nietzsche's entire argument gravitates around the now famous dichotomy of the Apollinian[139] versus the Dionysian spirit. Both are artistic expressions, but one of them, inspired by the cult of Dionysus is closer to the 'truth', in its unrefined state, since it gives man the ability to morph with immediate and distant spaces. In fact, according to Nietzsche this is where the brilliance of the Greek tragedy is to be found, since "[t]he lyric genius is conscious of a world of images *and* symbols" (ibid., p. 50, my emphasis). The world of images is the realm of phenomena and their appearance, whereas the world of symbols is enclosed in the nebula of instinct and feeling, hence we are faced with "the Apollinian art of sculpture and the nonimagistic, Dionysian art of music" (ibid., p. 33). It is in tragedy, where both moments combine, validating the phenomenal image-world in its 'truth', by giving the one who lives by its precepts, an example of his own disappearance, as both image and man (intoxication that overtakes illusion, in Nietzsche's lexicon).

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[138] Etymologically, aesthetics comes from perception or sensation. For a brief history of the concept, including its modern reformulations, see the introduction to Michael Kelly, ed., *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, vol. 1.

[139] On the use of the Apolinian instead of the more standard Apollonian see Walter Kaufmann, "Translator's Introduction" to *The Birth of the Tragedy*, p. 9, note 9.

The visual arts or reality whose programme is to create appearances (as Nietzsche points out, Apollo himself takes his name from that which shines and is 'the shining one') must unavoidably be the art of fragmentation, which consigns reality to the artistic 'stunt-double' that collects things into social/cultural singularities, including that of an individual and his dreams:

> ...the aesthetically sensitive man stands in the same relation to the reality of dreams as the philosopher does to the reality of existence; he is a close and willing observer, for these images afford him an interpretation of life... This joyous necessity of the dream experience has been embodied by the Greeks in their Apollo, the god of all plastic energies (ibid., p. 34–35).

The dream and its positioning in the cultural setting are well known, especially through Freud. It is indeed interesting that Nietzsche too does not dismiss its importance and existential necessity:

> The beautiful illusion of the dream worlds, in the creation of which every man is truly an artist is the prerequisite of all plastic art... In our dreams we delight in the immediate understanding of figures; all forms speak to us; there is nothing unimportant or superfluous. But even when this dream reality is most intense, we still have, glimmering through it, the sensation that it is *mere appearance*: at least this is my experience, and for its frequency – indeed, normality – I could adduce many proofs, including the sayings of the poets (ibid., p. 34).

An immediate comparison between this statement and Freud's dream theory, suggests itself, although at this point, it would take us too far a field. Let us simply notice the elaboration of the topic itself, and the similarity of language.[140]

The difference between the Apollinian and the Dionysian, at it most fundamental level is that of identity and its locality, of art as a plastic object that stands apart versus man as a work of art, because: "At bottom, the aesthetic phenomenon is simple... to see oneself transformed before one's own eyes and to begin to act as if one had actually entered into another body, another character" (ibid., p. 64). It is only the Dionysian moment through its special ability to construct another space, that provides one with this opportunity to experience transference, a process that later becomes the refuge and the energy source of psychoanalysis. It is in this kind of transformative transference where:

> ...we have our highest dignity in our significance as *works of art* [emphasis mine] – for it is only as an *aesthetic phenomenon* that existence and the world are eternally justified – while of course our consciousness of our own significance hardly differs from that which the soldiers painted on canvas have of the battle represented on it (ibid., p. 52).

In other words, the self that had become the work of art, loses the ability to say "that little word 'I' (ibid., p. 50). Instead, what now speaks through that dispossessed self is the anonymity of the universal:

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[140] In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), Freud refers directly to Nietzsche, when he writes: "We can guess how much to the point is Nietzsche's assertion, that in dreams 'some primaeval relic of humanity is at work which we can now scarcely reach any longer by a direct path' (p. 549). Given Freud's ad hoc quotation, it is difficult to say which particular passage or work he is referring to, but let us simply be aware that the entire *Birth of Tragedy* is full of not only references to dreams, but that dreams take center stage right at the beginning, when Nietzsche is attempting to set up his entire argument, in Section 1, especially pp. 34–36. Sections 2–6, 8, 10, 12 and 14 also refer directly to the dream-experience, in light of their Apollinian symbolism. An interesting aspect of the always intriguing and controversial issue of intellectual influences on Freud's thought (largely because Freud himself held an, at best, ambiguous position to the philosophical heritage under whose spell, he no doubt had to work) can also be glimpsed on p. 330 of *Interpretation of Dreams*, where Freud uses Nietzsche's phrase 'transvaluation of all values', to describe the psychic energy of dreams. Finally, in the same work, Freud also discusses the nature of dreams in terms of their plasticity (p. 352), not unlike Nietzsche, as we can surmise from the fragment already quoted above.

> Insofar as the subject is the artist … he has already been released from his individual will, and has become as it were, the medium through which the one truly existent subject celebrates his release in appearance (ibid., p. 52).

This is why, Nietzsche is able to conclude that our highest dignity, the most profound expression of the self, is not found in the debilitating and petty (even though often pretty and enticing) veil of individuality, but in the self that has given up enough of its own aggressiveness (hence given up his closely guarded enclosure, given up his name) for the benefit of the incumbent and always impinging namelessness. The disinvested self, as a body stripped naked of its cultural and social garb, is a mainstay of the Dionysian tragic ritual. Here, the otherwise highly placed men in the echelons of the polis, lose their civic/social 'portfolios' and experience reality through the radical otherness of a different skin (i.e., play other roles and enter other realities, such as the one of a slave, for instance) because normality has to be given up in the moment of creation, or mediation. This is how the body becomes the channel for other communicative media than its own physiology and "…is at once subject and object, at once poet, actor, and spectator" (ibid., p. 52) – in a word, precisely the kind of being that the fin de siècle attempts to revivify and inscribe into the new social unknown.

Through this, modern society becomes almost just as mysterious, complicated and unfathomable as nature used to be in the time of the Greek tragedy and its Dionysian cult as a mitigating technique. Modernity devises another coping mechanism to make sense of life. This is why, in the contrary motion (since the ecstatic-aural intoxication is unavailable) to Greek antiquity, although with similarly reversed dynamics, modernity sets up individuality as the highest category that achieves almost a divine status in the social comprehension. And to cultivate its phenomenon, a new cultic event to commemorate honour and celebrate it, must be initiated.

Minimally, what is required of this ritualistic engagement, is the ability to express and act out the inadequacy of individuality's illusion and illusiveness; to change skin and mark what is supposed to be liberating as that in which one is confined. In this sense, what we have done is enacted and elevated another Apollo, culturally speaking, to be the overseer of all things. Apollo, whose operational formula, as Nietzsche says, has always been *principium individuationis* is now expressed through the category of the self. For Nietzsche, this new height of imploding radiance, is the theoretical man, a descendent of Socrates, who revels and rolls around in his rationality and virtue of knowledge (his science), like in mud.

But even such scientific encampment will, at its limit, need the saving grace of art, given that it must experience a point of saturation, a condition that it arguably reaches at the turn of the century. Since that time onwards, no science is pure (i.e., objective and experimental in the empirical roughness of sensory evidence) but an admixture of reason, fantasy, art and imagination, tiptoeing on the line of the unbelievable but strangely probable (what has, for instance, only become visible recently, through our increasingly realistic ability to clone complete biological organisms).[141] This is how the modern self, in its imperfect and never completed individuality, creates of itself a materiality to be used in investigations of all the phenomena that have the tendency to face us mutely and arrogantly. We are hence living the work of art – a sentiment that is expressed by Marshall McLuhan, for example, but (as we now know) well after the fact of its founding, who says: "we must all become creative artists in order to cope with even the banalities of daily life".[142]

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[141] The fact that our age is undergoing a process of profound re-mythologizing through science is clearly evident in our gained ability to actually create via genetic engineering the many hybrid creatures with which the Greek mythology proper is imaginarily populated. If we are still not at this point, we are definitely getting close, given that we have been successful in mixing the DNA of various unrelated species.

Another way of viewing all this, is to say that Apollo effectuates perception as a private point of view (perspectival seeing as ownership of vision and hence identity), whereas Dionysus negates that feeling in favour of an immersion in a sort of *sensus communis*, or common sense, that gives one the feeling of oneness with the foreign, potentially threatening and even deadly, element. This is the only reason why the Dionysian sociality in Nietzsche's scheme is primary, i.e., it produces a *materiality* of communication, through the body in action (singing, dancing, music, etc.) and not simply illusion as the beautiful image. Speaking anachronistically, we can again see a Freudian moment in Nietzsche's thought, since "[m]an, to a large extent must be stripped of culture so that he can glimpse the truth" (Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 61).

This truth is not simply located in the animalistic rawness of the instinctual, but at a different level of sociality, a sort of 'sugar-free' product, as we could say today in our consumerist parlance. Such nascent state of 'togetherness' is one step removed from the cultural refinement, precisely because it eliminates the latter's ability to distribute and measure out various individualities and social types (political, civic and private) replacing these with a recursive action that reclaims the sensory as perceptual instability and over-saturation, where uniqueness is found in the ineffable of the fused environment. This fusion takes place through the aesthetic experience which combines the cultural with the natural elements. Truth, then, becomes an aesthetic artefact – a prophesy for a modernity which comes into its own and finds its archetypal/mystic form round the turn of the century!

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[142] Marshall McLuhan, "Report on Project in Understanding New Media", in Cavell, *McLuhan in Space: A Cultural Geography*, p. 91. Cavell's study clearly delineates how much McLuhan's thinking owes to the continental aesthetic and art history tradition, of (among others) Sigfried Gideon, Theodor Lipps and Alois Riegl.

The importance and the essence of what Nietzsche calls the Dionysian moment in human history, is the tremendous power of discursive liberation, its aptitude to found "…a new world of symbols [for which purpose] the entire symbolism of the body is called into play…" (ibid., p. 40). It is a world of activity and experience, but not knowledge, since as Nietzsche points out, 'knowledge kills action' (ibid., p. 60).[143]

The fact that Nietzsche eventually finds this active existence without knowledge in tones, is due to their unmatched and unequalled plastic materiality as 'phenomena without the body' (Schopenhauer)[144] which propel things through space in "…the immediate idea of life, [whereas] plastic art has an altogether different aim: beauty and eternity of phenomena" (ibid., p. 104). Such limpid plasticity of purely visual events, is not to be confused with the dynamic plasticity of music, which brings the environment into motion through renewal in the complicity of sound (as complication via co-optation). This is a condition of lowered definition of the environment (space without limit), which brings music to the eyes (Bahr's *Augenmusik*) and thereby a process where one is forced to pay attention to what is otherwise clearly visible but now, through the antidote of sonority blurred and translated into a different mode of delivery. Given that one tends to be especially attentive when the availability and surety of knowledge are shaken (a condition that psychoanalysis works untiringly to promulgate as the indispensable step towards a 'cure') one is forced to see behind the otherwise blinding Apollinian agenda of making appearances shine as non-negotiable categories. And whereas, there is quite a bit of joy found in such administrative stance (since it is based on the illusion of optimism), "Dionysian art, too, wishes to convince us of the eternal joy of existence: "only we are to seek this joy not in the phenomena, but behind them" (ibid., p. 104). The imperative of looking behind finds the truth and genius of the entire existential set-up, in the form and shape of dissonance, because:

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[143] This very astute observation comes during Nietzsche's discussion of *Hamlet*: "Knowledge kills action; action requires the veils of illusion: that is the doctrine of Hamlet … true knowledge, an insight into the horrible truth outweighs any motive for action, both in Hamlet and in the Dionysian man" (*The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 60). Such analysis anticipates a very similar conclusion reached by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, perhaps another indication of influence on Freud's thinking: "Hamlet represents the type of man whose power of direct action is paralyzed by an excessive development of his intellect" (SE 4: 265).

[144] During the course of his discussion, Nietzsche cites an extensive fragment about music, from Schopenhauer's *World as Will and Idea*; see pp. 101–103.

> It is precisely the tragic myth that has to convince us that even the ugly and disharmonic are part of artistic game… But this primordial phenomenon of Dionysian art is difficult to grasp, and there is only one direct way to make it intelligible and grasp it immediately: through the wonderful significance of *musical dissonance*… The joy aroused by the tragic myth has the same origin as the joyous sensation of dissonance in music (ibid., p. 141).

Dissonance provides the symptom of a conflicted, split and indecisive existence but with enough grammar, for it to be heard, noticed and experienced, thus:

> We now understand what it means to wish to see tragedy and at the same time to long to get beyond all seeing: referring to the artistically employed dissonances, we should have to characterize the corresponding state by saying that we desire to hear and at the same time long to get beyond all hearing (ibid., p. 141).

This desire to hear but at the same time to get beyond all hearing, is the way Schoenberg attempts to proceed in his exercise to strengthen and 'embalm' sound's purified aesthetics, amplifying the sonority of what is left over (the sonority of the ruin) after everything stylized and added-on, had been stripped away.

The musical cleft is a process of rendering environments and their spaces, discontinuous. It is a way of loosening their geometry, so that the elements which comprise them appear in a different configuration that entices to friction and being 'out of line'. By sequencing events and juxtaposing them to each other (juxtaposition literally means being side-by-side without connectives), by making them jarring and rugged, as opposed to smooth and linear, one is given the opportunity to *create* communication and not simply consume information, all because there are gaps in the semiotic structure that we naturally feel impelled to fill. The condition of this kind of 'conduit vacuum' is exemplified through the general and profound crisis of the word that grips the fin de siècle.

17. *In the Name of Namelessness*

There is perhaps no better example of the language-emergency than the work of Hugo von Hofmannsthal, one of the most prolific and influential literary figures of the Viennese modernism. Hofmannsthal, in his famous *Lord Chandos Letter*, but not only, aims at presenting us with the image of linguistic impotence, of how we have become disgusted with words because language had acquired a profile, which eventually destroys it, or makes it implode from within – the power of being able to stand-in for things.[145] In this, Hofmannsthal is very much continuing (if not bringing to completion) Nietzsche's project of linguistic eviction, which is already clearly formulated in *The Birth of Tragedy*:

> Language can never adequately render the cosmic symbolism of music, because music stands in symbolic relation to the primordial contradiction and primordial pain in the heart of the primal unity, and therefore symbolizes a sphere which is beyond and prior to all phenomena. Rather, all phenomena, compared with it, are merely symbols: hence *language*, as the organ and symbol of phenomena, can never by any means disclose the innermost heart of music; language, in its attempt to imitate it, can only be in superficial contact with music… (pp. 55–56).

Hofmannsthal writes in almost exactly the same cadence, although the phenomenon of music is replaced by the one of 'silence' and the plasticity of gesture (i.e., dance, mime, etc.). At first glance, this seems to be a total reversal of Nietzsche's 'ideology', but the matter, as it stands, presents itself in quite the opposite form. Music in Nietzsche, as silence in Hofmannsthal, are 'metaphoric technologies'. In this sense, both Nietzsche and Hofmannsthal propose to construct a system of transfigurations, which can transport the subject beyond the range of immediate sensory availability, and hence the Nietzschian conclusion that "[f]or a genuine poet, metaphor is not a rhetorical figure but a vicarious image the he actually beholds in place of a concept" (ibid., p. 63). In other words, metaphors are not merely literary devices, but *literal* things, which spin out of themselves the empirical world in divergent ratios to what had been previously ingrained. With this 'axiom', Hofmannsthal is very much in agreement, both intellectually and creatively.[146]

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[145] "For people are tired of talk. They feel a deep disgust with words. For words have pushed themselves in front of things" (in Editor's Introduction to Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Poems and Plays*, p. xxiv). We might want to think about how to reconcile this statement, with psychoanalysis' 'talking cure'. If we return to our previous discussion of Anna O. we will realize that psychoanalysis' procedure, of which Anna O. is the starting point and prime example, is precisely to make the patient, if not disgusted, then defiantly exhausted with the constant stream of words, a state that would effectuate a point of rapture, so that what hides behind them, can in some measure, come to the surface. Anna O.'s condition, as we will remember, is symptomatically represented by the loss of language.

The fight against the usurping power of language, responds to the pressing need to redress the increasingly overwhelming and prevalent impotence of the social, given that sociality, all of a sudden, brings forth the strange contradiction of the individual, as its expression. The objectionable nature of individuality, is not so much found in its formal category, as a principle of social organization, but in its, as yet, missing expressive link, and we can ask further (taking into view the beginning of our century) whether or not that problem had been solved? Assuming for a moment the idea and the phenomenon of individuality inevitable, the necessity that immediately arises is the active description as well as construction of a locality where individuality can thrive. As we have seen, the contours of this space present themselves through the psychology of the ruin, where space as limit is disbanded (because individuality, to support itself, needs the idea of unlimited potential), in favour of space as environment, where expectation and chance are allowed to flourish.

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[146] The 19th century German linguistic philosophy uses the technique of metaphor to justify the reality of language. It proposes a close link between the body and the mind, where metaphors are not simply poetic/figurative embellishments but literal phenomena. Exemplary on this account is Gustav Gerber (1820–1901), who proves to be of major influence on Nietzsche. Gerber not only publishes *Das Ich als Grundlage unserer Weltanschauung* ('The I as the Fundament of our Worldview', 1893), a title which is very interesting, in reference to our thematic discussion of Freud, but also establishes the idea of language as an aesthetic construct, or an art-form. This thesis is explored most directly in Gerber's 1871 book, *Die Sprache als Kunst* ('Language as Art'). In this connection, language for Gerber is a *Sprachkunst* (similar to the *Baukunst* in architecture, as we can say from the view point of our narrative) whose root is a sound-image (!) or *Lautbild*, as the first building block of words, which then is extended metaphorically into more and more abstract signs of the original *Sprachwurzel* (or root), including the conceptual. Taking this into account, Nietzsche is then able to say, not only that metaphors are alive, and that truth operates according to the aesthetic/metaphorical quality, but also, that all concepts are simply stale/overused metaphors, which must be continually renewed. German linguistic theory, further serves to bolster our thesis of art as the communicative/existential paradigm, which becomes the creative calculus of reality. For a discussion of this entire problematic, see Brigitte Nerlich and David D. Clarke, "Mind, Meaning and Metaphor: The philosophy and psychology of Metaphor in 19th-century Germany". In *History of the Human Sciences* 14, no. 2: 39–61.

In the last leg of our investigative efforts, I will propose a name for this kind of space, that could perhaps provide us with some heuristic value, but before that, this space of which there seems to be some much talk, must be emptied and hollowed out, thus showing itself through the formula of namelessness, as it in fact does in the vortex of the fin de siècle.

Hofmannsthal, especially through his dramaturgical works, constructs an experiment of mediation between the expectation for individuality and the larger, untamed and mute social forces. Theatre as a project of controlled engagement with the social world, is not new to us, the most famous instance of its reach is Brecht's carefully scripted alliteration of social and theatrical through the *Verfremdungseffekt*, where the audience is jolted back to life and to perception, by what they see on the stage – circumstances that they might be blind to in the everyday existence. Hofmannsthal's theatrical practice does not rely on such a procedure of estrangement, but rather mimics in its gesture, the folding of the two spaces of society and the individual into a plastic ambiguity, thus presenting one with the possibility of being involved in the creation of one's own experience. In this sense, Hofmannsthal is exploring the option of the Dionysian, tragic space, to the extent that is practical in the modern social setting, introduced by Nietzsche as the model for all communicative (artistic) elaboration.

According to Michael Huter, Hofmannsthal "was not only *the* poetic genius in Vienna at the end of the century, but also one of the most sensitive theorists of language, and among the first experts on Nietzsche to be taken seriously".[147] Such sensitive, Nietzschian moment is most famously expressed in a short piece of prose from 1902, entitled *Ein Brief* ("A Letter"). As the title suggests, it is a fictional letter written by a certain Lord Chandos to his mentor and supporter, the philosopher Francis Bacon. The protagonist responds to Bacon's inquiry about his literary silence. What follows is one of the greatest instances of doubt as to the continual and unquestioned acceptance of language, in its domesticated form, as the abode in which we are able to hide and feel protected, and more importantly, through which we can know anything at all.

The *Chandos Letter* is characterized by Hofmannsthal himself, as "one way into existence".[148] It is an existence that very boldly and insistently provides a way out of the realm of intellectuality and all these words, into a space which loses its prior contemplative identity, thus finding another form of being through direct immersion in life itself. In this sense, what one is attempting to acquire and see, is literally "a universe in the grain of sand", or in the watering can, or a cellar full of rats, or a spider's web etc., as Chandos indeed does as he goes through an extended list of enumerating to his absent interlocutor an adequate description of the kind of condition that came one day and changed his entire perceptive disposition:

> Since then I have led an existence so empty of intellect [*geistlos*] or thought [*gedankenlos*] that I fear you can hardly form a conception of it, an existence, to be sure, that is practically indistinguishable from that of my neighbours, my relatives, and most land-owning nobles of this realm, and is not entirely without its joyful and enlivening moments. It will not be easy for me to convey the substance of these good moments to

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[147] Michael Huter, "Body as Metaphor: Aspects of the Critique and Crisis of Language at the Turn of the Century with Reference to Egon Schiele", in Patric Werker, ed., p. 124.
[148] In Bennett, *Hugo von Hofmannsthal*, p. 109.

> you; words fail me once again. For what makes its presence felt at such times, filling any mundane object around me with a swelling tide of higher life as if it were a vessel, in fact has no name and is no doubt hardly nameable. I cannot expect you to understand me without an illustration... A watering can, a harrow left in the field, a dog in the sun, a shabby churchyard, a cripple, a farmhouse – any of these can become the vessel of my revelation.[149]

If Chandos now finds himself in the intellect and thought-free ('geistlos' and 'gedankenlos') zone; a world, in other words, that all of a sudden has become much more expressive but practically uncommunicative, since it had lost the power of informative signification to others, who are not initiated into it, he is also, as we notice, falling back into the incognito muteness of the social. The struggle for this new organic form of belonging is not easy, for it involves the entire physical apparatus of the body:

> I feel a rapturous [entzückendes], utterly infinite interplay in me and about me, and none of the interplaying essences is such that I could not flow into it. It is as if my body consisted entirely of coded messages that unlock everything for me. (*Lord Chandos Letter*, p. 125, translation modified)

The motion of unlocking is a way of approach that has renounced the focus of perspective and evidence of the senses, in favour of a total, membrane like resonance with the world:

> Everywhere I was in the midst, never confronted with mere appearance. Or I had the feeling that everything is metaphor, every creature a key to the others, and that I was the person who could take hold of them one at a time and unlock as many of the others as could be unlocked. (ibid., p. 120, translation modified)

In this, Chandos feels the impinging sense of oneness with everything around, where all the usual dichotomous categories of opposing tension, such as thought and body, culture and the animal world, loneliness and community, melt away into a natural state, which stands as a hybrid space composed of nature proper and the consciousness of belonging to it:

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[149] Hofmannsthal, *The Lord Chandos and Other Writings*, p. 123, translation modified. Hereafter cited in text.

> I felt nature in everything, in the aberrations of insanity, just as well as in the refinements of a Spanish ceremonial … and in all the nature I felt my own self… One thing was like the other; none presented itself as dreamy and heavenly nature or bodily violence, and so it was through the entire span of life, left and right hand; everywhere I was in the midst. (ibid., p. 120, translation modified)

If, as Benjamin Bennett points out in his comprehensive study of Hofmannsthal's oeuvre "[t]he idea of ordinary social life as an unacknowledged mysticism corresponds to the quality of the theatre as society",[150] then we must make a short and necessary step from such conclusion (which inevitably suggests itself) towards the realization that what emerges through all this, is a new idea of a community as form. "Form is a mask", says Hofmannsthal, "but without form [there is] neither giving nor taking from soul to soul".[151] This new form of the social corresponds to some of the most interesting and evocative analyses of its space that emerge in the latter part of the 20th century, such as, for instance Bourdieu's habitus (the unacknowledged network of relations in which each social actor must ultimately recognize himself), or Goffman's blueprint for the dramaturgical as the primary social mechanism. But I think that we can be even more radical, and say that the talk here (in Hofmannsthal as in the fin de siècle discourse) is not simply about a new format of the social, but society as *form*. This is the reason why individuality becomes such a point of tension, since it is now not simply a problem of genuine integration into nature (as it was in Locke or Rousseau, for instance) but a new mass-scale phenomenon through which society individualizes itself from its previously accepted natural cogency, and whose concept it used to set up its own functionality.

Individuality, of course, as category is not exclusive to modernity, since we can in fact consider Socrates as the first widely known and available example of such a stance

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[150] Bennet, *Hugo von Hofmannsthal*, p. 117.

[151] In Michael Hamburger's Introduction to Hofmannsthal's *Poems and Verse Plays*, p. xxv.

(as Nietzsche implicitly does in his analysis) who makes it his life-long task to stay at odds with the aggregate of the polis, for which activity he is eventually put to death. In this, Socrates is more modern, from our standpoint, than the Greek polis has the capacity to absorb. What is new and what emerges at the turn of the century, is the positioning and placement of such individuality, which (considered from the most rational corner of a community) should have no space for free and unadulterated expression, since it is a sort of general anaesthetic that undermines the greater good, given that individuality at its utmost of intensity is inherently engaged in the 'for profit economy' of self-interest. And, if at the time of Socrates, the individual was a privileged type, who under the special name of a philosopher, engaged in unencumbered pursuit of knowledge and wisdom against all odds and consequences, our modernity in taking over its ambience (without necessarily thinking through the functional intricacies that individuality carries within itself) makes an exception into the typology of common property.

Thus arises the contradiction that having a mind of one's own, is the most desirable, responsible and effective way of living the social. The only available solution, as it seems, and in the end this is fin de siècle's message of reconciliation and immense possibility, is to live the precarious stability of the ruin, of being a "poet in ruins", as Bennett in fact describes Hofmannsthal. The poet himself notes that: "All of my pieces adapted from antiquity have to do with the dissolution of the concept of individuality" (Bennet, *Hugo von Hofmannsthal*, p. 105). He takes such dissolution as the intellectual heritage of European civilization, which eventually leads to "the ego as a manifestation of forces, in its passive as well as in its active aspect, which are synthesized [in a] purified conception of personality, as a glowing center of force and love" (ibid., pp. 105–106).

In the *Lord Chandos Letter*, this is expressed through a new sort of materiality "…a kind of feverish thinking, but thinking in matter [*in einem Material*] more direct, fluid, and glowing than words" (p. 127, translation modified). It is only this heaving space caught between stasis and dissolution, that gives enough time for the resonance of silence to take hold, and there is perhaps no greater inversion of all values, than the ability to be silent, when for everything and from everywhere there is always a demand for a proof.

To supplement our discussion, we can also look towards another literary figure of the fin de siècle Vienna, Peter Altenberg, who in a short prose fragment (a stylistic device which characterizes most of his output and of which he becomes a virtuoso performer)[152] entitled quite aptly *Individuality*, sets out to disentangle its identity. Altenberg draws a distinction between the 'only' or the particular, and the 'first' or preceding in his brief analysis, thus proposing to mitigate individuality's purely topological aspects with durational qualities:

> The *"Only"* being is worthless, fate's impoverished game with an individual. The *"First"* being is everything! For he has a mission, he is a leader, he knows that the entire humanity follows him! … In *all* of humanity, buried deeply, there lies a sensitive, sad, idealistically dreaming poet… The poet is never the *"Only"*. For then he would be worthless, an abomination of the soul [*Seelen-Freak*]! He is the *"First"* … *True* individuality is being ahead of time and alone, what later *all, all* must become![153]

The poet, or a truly modern social self, leads by a quiet example; through the instance in which he is able to create uniqueness of events as his art, but not become a detached singularity – a type of vulgar individuality against which Hofmannsthal works tirelessly.

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[152] In fact, Altenberg elevates the literary fragment to the status of a genre. Here one possible interpretation of Schoenberg's many miniatures and unfinished compositions suggests itself, i.e., as the reflexive form that, to a certain extent reigns as the formula of artistic expression at the turn of the century.

[153] Peter Altenberg, "Individualität", in *Die Wiener Moderne, Literatur, Kunst und Musik zwischen 1890 und 1910*, p. 425, my translation.

It is by immersing oneself in namelessness, in lack of identification, that another dimension of space eventually opens up, whose most poignant instantiation is sound, given that through its sonority and its rhythm, sound is the excellently calibrated and attuned delivery system of purified, accelerated duration.[154] In this, sound delivers something that escapes other arts – transcendence of objective contrast between the space in which one is contained and the one that is actively constructed, since only the production of sound waves, in various configurations, can deliver that experience most immediately. In other words, sound envelopes all that stands apart and proposes to be an obstacle, into the embrace of a new landscape.

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The attraction of music to an entire generation of artists and intellectuals at the turn of the century, is also evident in another Viennese writer, Hermann Broch. In his collection of short stories, published under the title of the *Die Schuldlosen* ('The Guiltless'),[155] we find (among others) the following titles: 'Parable of the Voice', 'Voices 1913', 'Voices 1923', 'Voices 1933'. The theme in most of the stories in that volume, is an interplay of sound, art, namelessness, and individuality. In *Voices 1913*, written in verse, and presenting both an assessment and the flavour of the European civilization on the threshold of war, Broch incorporates the latest musical trends into the chain of evidence:

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[154] Even though we cannot engage with the entire philosophical issue of time, it should be mentioned that quite obviously, the entire turn of the century is under the spell of durational philosophy, especially the one of Henri Bergson. It is also worth pointing out, that many of the descriptions of the connection between time and space (their mutual interpolation) anticipate physics, especially Einstein, through his Theory of Relativity, where time becomes a dimension of it own, with its own 'existential' rights, distorting space (or more accurately reformulating it into another conditionality) with the acceleration approaching speed of light. The idea of the fourth dimension, and hence non-Euclidean space, is not only (we have to mention this again) presented most immediately and accessibility in sound, but also taken up into an intellectual vocabulary of post-structuralism. This is the intellectual enclosure, in which, for instance Marshall McLuhan's post-war thought operates.

[155] Hermann Broch, *The Guiltless*, hereafter cited in text.

> …menacing, alluring dissonance./ The triad becomes intolerable and absurd,/ a tradition no longer possible to live in… (*The Guiltless*, p. 11)

The Methodically Constructed (1917), begins in the following manner:

> Every work of art must have an exemplary content and must in its uniqueness reveal the unity and universality of all happening: this is true of music, especially of music, and in emulation of music it should be possible to construct a work of narrative art in deliberate counterpoint (ibid., p. 26).

The story is about an innocuous teacher of mathematics, who revels in the greyness of practical non-existence, begging the question: "Can such a minimum of personality, such a non-self, be made into an object of human interest? Might one not just as well develop the history of some dead thing, of a shovel, for instance?" (ibid., p. 27). The protagonist has a personality of a thing without totally falling into the realm of the objective. He thus forages in this in-between realm, suspended, interned in himself, but with enough freedom that ambiguity provides, to be a work of art. Hence, Broch's last paragraph, mirrors the opening one:

> Every work of art must have an exemplary content and must in its uniqueness disclose the unity and universality of all happening, but it should not be forgotten that such uniqueness need not necessarily be totally free from ambiguity: it can even be maintained that a work of music represents only one solution, and perhaps a fortuitous one at that, among a multitude of possible solutions (ibid., p. 38).

Broch is one of those writers, in whom the traces of other influences and perhaps more artistically defined personalities are clearly visible. In fact, this goes so far, as to make Robert Musil accuse Broch of creative larceny, pure and simple.[156] In the just quoted passages, it is not only Nietzsche that we can glimpse, but also Hofmannsthal, who according to Broch himself is characterized by the suppression of the 'I-element'.[157] Broch carries this message of suppression and erasure of individuality enclosed in names (whether as personality or a phenomenon) exemplarily in his later work, such as *Sailing before a Light Breeze* (1931), where the "voice-destinies" of the characters, intermingle in a disarray of a new found irresponsibility to the standard environmental dynamics, and this is why:

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[156] In his Diaries, Musil writes: "[Hermann] *Broch*: Leaning. When one leans against a wall, one's suit gets covered in white stains. Without it being plagiarism", in Robert Musil, *Tagebücher, Aphorismen, Essays und Reden*, p. 361.

> There's only one defense: namelessness. People who have lost their names can't be called, no one can call them; thank heavens I've forgotten my name (ibid., p. 19).

The action, suspended in the constantly slipping definition of places and characters, seemingly takes place in a Paris café, where a young man, overhears a conversation between a couple whose flimsy reality is saturated with a destiny of being temporarily thrown by circumstances into a common phenomenon of expectation:

> For now it was to be anticipated that his voice, which had been etched in the air, would become entangled with the voices of those two, and he calculated at what point in the air before him this might happen…
>
> Now we're getting somewhere, the young man thought: our voices are becoming beautifully entangled, our destinies will follow. Why should I let myself get further entangled in the destinies of these two people? (ibid., pp. 18–19).

This question, whose ringing muteness (for we find out in the end that the protagonist, in all likelihood is speaking to himself, and that there was perhaps no one at the adjacent table) just like the sounds of the café "…that were very much like silence" (ibid., p. 14) is a trap, that proposes to snare one in the web of new existential complications, whereas "[o]nly death can save us from new entanglements" (ibid., p. 17). And hence, the entire narrative is soaked-through with the expectation of death, both literally and euphemistically, since the couple whom the protagonist observes via his acoustic sense (he never actually looks at them, or attempts to do so) the couple who, according to the silent observer, could be mother and son, but then seem to be only two lovers who are playing out their affair in this kind of paternalistic arrangement, seems to be running away from something or someone, expecting to be confronted, caught, exposed, even murdered for their emotional transgression. But the murder had already taken place, because all three, the three in one (since, as we pointed out, there seems to be only one character) are symbolically deflated, given that they have no name, or at least had learned how names should be given up:

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[157] In Michael Hamburger's Introduction to Hofmannsthal's *Poems and Verse Plays*, p. lv.

> Haven't they got any names for each other? Can it be that they already know how dangerous names are? (ibid., p. 19).

The narrative thus exemplifies a dissonant, or more correctly still an assonant union, which collects multiplicity into the fray of distinction without special property/identity rights, just like the notes in Schoenberg's compositions which give up their names for the sake of innominate expression, which harmonizes with no understanding for the privileged, uniquely cornered and non-negotiable space:

> "Understanding is entanglement," said the young man, "and that is my business. If things had no names, there would be no understanding, but there would also be no disaster" (ibid., p. 20).

Nonetheless, it is still necessary to acknowledge that "…events are spun between names, and without names the world would stand still…" (ibid., p. 20), which leads to only one possible solution – a reconditioning of the personal pronoun 'I':

> "You mustn't worry, I don't want you to worry," says the boyish voice pleadingly. "I…" What does he mean, I? You be still; people without money should keep still. You make me sick. I want to pay and I will pay. I am I. Even without a name, I am I… (ibid., p. 22).

It is this reformulation and preservation of the empty, silent 'I' that leads Broch to conclude that "…now all names disgust me" (ibid., p. 23), a very close variation on the theme introduced by Hofmannsthal and Chandos' disgust with words. The culmination point of the narrative should also not surprise us, since it is a sort of trinity where one is three, or the other two, a kind of merger where according to Hofmannsthal "…drei sind Eins: ein Mensch, ein Ding, ein Traum" ("…three are One: one man, one thing, one dream").[158] In Broch's story the one man, who dreams or imagines the other two, is also actively engaged with the 'bio-sphere' of the café, its physical environment as living membrane. And what finally takes over is the 'decorum of silence':

> The instruments are being tuned, thinks the young man, and when all voices are in harmony, the moment of death will be at hand… (ibid., p. 24).

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The decorum of silence is the hard learned lesson of Lord Chandos who loses the ability to think or speak comprehensively and logically about anything at all, and instead gains the quality of an aesthetic man, who perceives indiscriminately and incessantly, like a radio receiver. In this, he is a man who loses his manners, or more accurately mannerisms. Thus, he disposes of his phenomenological skin, in favour of becoming a micro-expression of the social, in his own self; a move akin to Freud's ego-psychology which carries the burden and the imprint of not only all the extant social forces within the depths of its psychological make-up, but also the mysterious weight of all the past of human civilization. Here, Freud and Hofmannsthal are singing two arias of the same opera, whose libretto is once again provided by Hofmannsthal: "Manners are walls, disguised with mirrors... Manners are based on a profound conception of the necessity of isolation, while upholding – deliberately upholding – the illusion of contact".[159] Of course, both Freud and Schoenberg are preoccupied with exposing and eventually eliminating manners that cloak the real silhouette of truth, and clog the communicative channels that are hooked up to its 'heart monitor'. The only difference between them, we are perhaps ready to say this finally, is the name of the experience they set out to untangle, ego psychology and tonality, at both ends of reality.

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[158] See editor's introduction to Hofmannsthal, *Poems and Verse Plays*, p. xl.
[159] Ibid., p. xix.

The mannerism in Freud is the personality that outmanoeuvres itself, thus becoming neurotically 'manneristic', drenched in pathological symptoms. For Schoenberg of course, it is tonality that is the expression of manners (as something appropriate and to be preserved unthinkingly, for its own sake) and full of mannerisms, as reflexive solutions to the problem of sound, whose automatism quickly acquires the ambiance of 'musical hiccups'.[160] Given these specific historical and cultural circumstances, both Freud and Schoenberg construct a unique frame, as the conduit through which certain things might become available for manipulation and eventually for living. We are speaking here of a vacuum of sorts, an auditory space, that operates on the level of silence, not because it falls into the stupor of deafness, but on the contrary because it is able to silence the overwhelmingly vociferous levels of standard communication as language, and hence bring out into relief, that lowly element of weak definition, which always needed a different level of magnification and focus. Created, is an instrument of 'measurement' or registration akin to a stethoscope. What transpires is the amplification and sounding of silence, the background white noise, which we are predisposed to eliminate as sensory pollution. This seems to be an oxymoron, until we remind ourselves of the idiomatic expression 'the ringing silence' (an occurrence, as we well know, that arises when the external sound stimulus is eliminated to the degree that now the ear seemingly perceives only itself, or the silence all around it) or yet again realize that:

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[160] Schoenberg reacts in a similar way to all the "...isms" as he calls them, or various intellectual and artistic movements "...in whom I can only see mannerists" ("Forward to Three Satires for Mixed Chorus, op. 28", in *A Schoenberg Reader*, p. 187).

> There is no solid, definable identity between human reality and the word. There can be none. Only the path of indirectness is open, the paradox of surrender to this language while still relativizing or negating it… What Kierkegaard knew is also the wisdom of *Der Schwierige* [a play by Hofmannsthal; The Difficult Man]: "Silence concealed in silence arouses suspicion… But silence concealed in a decided talent for conversation, that, as sure as I live, is silence.[161]

We might want to quibble here and try to decide whether Hofmannsthal's formulation from *Der Schwierige* is in fact positive or negative, meant honestly or ironically? But this would only be an academic exercise, since the ambiguity of the pronouncement, matches the world in its own signature, according to Hofmannsthal. If the procedure is ambiguity and hence a way of always being 'speech impaired' and to a considerable degree silent but never losing one's voice completely (having that decided talent for conversation), then such silence as respiratory blockage and a gag in one's mouth is also the only precondition to being able to say something, perhaps for the first time. Kierkegaard's wisdom referenced above, is evident in the pseudonym *Johannes de Silentio*, at the beginning of *Fear and Trembling*, which is not applied for nothing or whimsically, but in order to able to speak at all.

Having stated the problem in such terms, we must come to the realization that what lies at the bottom and what is truly at issue, is not the crude division between silence and speech, or the world and language, but a word that comes from the correct side of the universal ledger – the side that lives precariously in the unknown and the expectation for its partial (always partial) retrieval. This is the kind of aesthetic simplicity that lies at the bottom of psychoanalysis: to facilitate a new power of perception by using language against itself, breaking it apart and thus unmasking the instability of knowledge that is supposedly immemorial, omniscient and unassailable – the knowledge pertaining to the self. The entire configuration and complex of knowledge under interrogation, creates a space of *assonance*, of juxtaposition, which possesses the functionality of a stethoscope. It is these two formulations that will preoccupy us until the end this narrative, as we turn to Freud and Schoenberg, forcing their output (or at least what is most exemplary of it) into a direct, face to face, interaction.

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[161] Brinkmann, "Hofmannsthal und die Sprache", quoted in Benett, *Hugo von Hofmannsthal*, p. 121.

18. Musings on Musical Psychoanalysis

After speaking at length about the identification of the fin de siècle logic through the radius that connects the circumference of the turn of the century to its always fleeting centre, it is now time to raise the stakes and approach this centre, or at least, that element which we have charged with that function, directly. I am speaking here, of course, about Freud and Schoenberg, two radiant personalities who operate firmly in the mould of the fin de siècle and are caught in its premise (or on its premises), which is simply suspended and aloft like dust. Their two figures are often unwilling and unaware participants in its manner of expression, which hesitates and teeters on the verge of a dumbfounding mannerism, but they nonetheless find a way through the magnetism of being simply fashionable, and set up an enclosure, a space of encounter with reality that is not only unique, but functional, in the most instrumental meaning of the expression – like a stethoscope applied to the chest of a patient.

What evidence do we have that Freud and Schoenberg had been influenced by each other? Historically speaking, none whatsoever, since they have never met, nor written to one another. We know from Stuckenschmidt's biography of Schoenberg, that in 1971 when the inventory of Schoenberg's library in Brentwood Park, California, was taken, there were no psychological or psychoanalytic works found among the books (*Schoenberg*, p. 183). This does not mean that the two men did now about each other. Given that they both occupied the volatile and highly charged environment of Vienna, such ignorance would have been impossible. Psychoanalysis was a much popularized topic in both the intellectual circles and everyday Viennese café life, not in a small part because of its constant and very often controversial presence in the press. There were also common personalities who circulated among the two micro-universes instigated by Freud and Schoenberg, both of them acting as pivot-points which attracted and repelled followers, adherents, disciples and students.

Two of such loyal and more 'worldly' life-long friends, on Schoenberg's side, David Josef Bach and Oscar Adler, delved into a larger intellectual context, including the psychoanalytic one, through (as one of the factors) the immersion in the milieu of the university (an opportunity that was not available to Schoenberg, given his lack higher formal education). There is of course, also the famous and short analysis that Freud performed on Mahler in the Summer of 1910 in Holland,[162] and the inextricable entanglement of Schoenberg's artistic personality (especially its practical survival) in Gustav Mahler's private and musical life. In fact, given what Stuckenschmidt says about the introduction of Schonberg into a new world of Mahler, especially his wife Alma, and the type of intellectual and artistic celebrities with whom the young and previously isolated Schoenberg started to rub shoulders, it is impossible to image that in the vast range of discussed topics, psychoanalysis would not be among them. The intensity of the suddenly enlarged existential and intellectual horizon in Schoenberg's as well as Mahler's life can be glimpsed in Stuckenschmidt's description:

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[162] The entire episode is related by Jones: "About this time [1910] Gustav Mahler, the famous composer, was greatly distressed about his relationship to his wife, and Dr. Nepallek, a Viennese psycho-analyst who was a relative of Mahler's wife, advised him to consult Freud… So they met in an hotel in Leyden and then spent four hours strolling through the town conducting a sort of psycho-analysis. Although Mahler had had no previous contact with psycho-analysis, Freud said he had never met anyone who seemed to understand it so swiftly… In the course of the talk Mahler suddenly said that now he understood why his music had always been prevented from achieving the highest rank through the noblest passages, those inspired by the most profound emotions, being spoilt by the intrusion of some commonplace melody. His father, apparently a brutal person, treated his wife badly, and when Mahler was a young boy there was a specially painful scene between them. It become quite unbearable to the boy, who rushed away from the house. At that moment, however, a hurdy-gurdy in the street was grinding out the popular Viennese air 'Ach, du lieber Augustin'. In Mahler's opinion the conjunction of high tragedy and light amusement was from then on inextricably fixed in his mind, and the one mood inevitably brought the other with it" (Jones, *Sigmund Freud, Life and Work*, vol. 2, pp. 88–89). A direct connection to psychoanalysis also touched the even more intimate environment of Schoenberg, than the one of Mahler. Both Alban Berg and Anton von Webern, were analyzed at one point; Berg consulted Freud in 1908 in an attempt to cure his asthma and Webern underwent analysis with Alfred Adler, in 1913, soon after his falling-out with Freud (see Lewis Wickes, "Schoenberg, *Erwartung*, and the Reception of Psychoanalysis in Musical Circles in Vienna until 1910/11", *Studies in Music* 23 (1989): 88-106).

> Both Mahler and Schoenberg knew little about the events which were taking place round the turn of the century in the artistic scene. When the young Alma-Maria Schindler and her stepfather Carl Moll entered the circle of musicians a new world was opened to Mahler and soon Schoenberg… Alma, the housewife and very gifted artist, had been friendly with painters and painting through her father. A strong youthful love had tied her to the much older Gustav Klimt… And so in her house – and this corresponded entirely to the wide cultural horizon of Gustav Mahler's – there were meetings of as many painters, sculptors and architects as there were musicians and opera people. Schoenberg, who had hardly any contact in his youth with art, looked with growing interest into a world which opened his eyes in a new way. His later friendship with the architect Adolf Loos, and the painters Oskar Kokoschka, Max Oppenheimer and Vassily Kandinsky had their foundations in these years (*Schoenberg*, p. 93).

To this list, among others, may also be added Hermann Bahr and Peter Altenberg.

The situation, then, in relation to psychoanalysis, as it stands, could be described (at least initially), given Schoenberg's complicated and always expanding network of relationships with some of the leading figures of Viennese and European modernism, as passive awareness. But evidence that it is more than just such a casual point of potential interest, comes to us in the shape of a drafted and never published fragment for an essay, that proposes to deal with psychoanalysis and music! Given the general title of 'Psychoanalysis and Music' in the catalogue of the Schoenberg archives and dated 1932, the text meanders from an ironic stance in relation to the pop-version of psychoanalysis as the fashionable talk and dilettantism that so often arises during the course of its application, to a serious engagement with the concept of the Oedipus Complex and its relation to music, through the notion of familial harmony, or rather the Oedipal transgression that lies at the roots of its definition. Throughout, Schoenberg displays a remarkable knowledge of some of the more intricate psychoanalytic concepts, and their application to the analysis of reality – much more than we would expect, given the official lacuna of knowledge on the topic, if such can be accurately estimated by the contents of what books are to be found and remain in someone's possession. It is to this intriguing and important text that we now turn, whose detailed analysis, will help bring our argument onto a path of an interesting intellectual and theoretical confluence – a juxtaposition that will allow us to launch our discussion of the fin de siècle logic through, arguably, its most exemplary phenomena, psychoanalysis and Schoenberg's reconstruction of tonality, to a new and concluding climax point.

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The draft begins with the following sentence: "Oedipus frees his native city of Thebes by solving the riddle of the Sphinx",[163] and in one gesture sets up the eventual comparison of dissonance to the mythological creature, that will be expressed towards the end of the manuscript. Of course, here we have to take the meaning enclosed in this conclusion, with a grain of salt, or with its full theoretical implication in mind, for it is precisely because of Oedipus' ability to solve the riddle and to seemingly arrive at a resolution, that he brings the prophecy of committing an abominable crime against his native city full-circle. It is therefore of much importance to remember this, especially later on, as the discussion in Schoenberg's draft will shift from the mere *mythos* of the story, to the *melos* of music, and its general harmonious ambiguity.

The point-form nature of the sketch of what will later be presented in the shape of a more or less completed and continuously drafted narrative, progresses and enumerates some of the most important psychoanalytical constructs in one vertical column, thus underneath the opening sentence quoted above, we find this: "Slips [Parapraxes],

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[163] This chapter is based on Schoenberg's unpublished text "Psychoanalyse und Musik" from the Archives of the Arnold Schoenberg Center in Vienna, [ca. 1932], T39.23. All translations are mine.

Inferiority Complex, Inhibitions, Dreams, Libido, Compulsion to Worthiness/Prestige, Overcompensating Lofty Accomplishments, Neurosis". All these, directly or indirectly, will be used by Schoenberg in his impending discussion. A little further down the page, under point number (17), we find the direct mention of the Oedipus Complex, and another sequence of associations, of concepts that are strung underneath and hang like beads of a broken chain: "Inferiority Complex, Abreaction, Repression, Unconscious-Motive,[164] Dream Life". Immediately following this chain of associations, whose general scheme of a sequence often results in unanticipated and unusual connections which, as we know, are important not only to Freud (especially to the technique that gives one access to dreams via an interpretation) but also to Schoenberg's 12-tone procedure, we get a sentence fragment "…the movements will pass, but the science shall remain; science will take care of that" (*Psychoanalyse und Musik*). It is thus, that we arrive at an important clue, as to how the main draft of the essay should be approached, i.e., it should be divided into two parts, which deal with two closely linked but ultimately quite separate aspects of the same phenomenon, in this case psychoanalysis.

The satirical exposure to which Schoenberg means to submit the potential reader speaks of psychoanalysis as a corrupt version of the original (a popular movement), a pseudo-science of the type that today we would simply call 'pop-psychology', which no matter how ridiculous it may sound, and despite that it may perpetuate scientific inaccuracies, can still be used aggressively and become quite damaging, especially in the hands of one's enemies, always an active concern on Schoenberg's part, throughout his life. And no doubt, Freud would be, to a large extent, in agreement with this assessment, given his monumental struggle to keep psychoanalysis free of distorting and corrupting influences, which, as we know, he fought against fiercely, even at the risk of alienating some of his most stringent supporters, at one time of another (the Jung episode comes to mind here, of course, as the most illustrative of such instances). The second part of the proposed essay, which in its German transcription bears the title 'Composers Broaden The Horizons of Your Knowledge', loses much of its ironic tone, and acquires the seriousness of a systematic engagement with the theme of psychoanalysis' understanding of a human reality, relating it back to the question of music, in particular harmony. Our discussion will be conducted according to such a thematic sequence.

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[164] Note that the German *das Motiv*, apart from the rendition above, can also mean (depending on the context) an artistic motif or a theme. As it is difficult to know, given the brevity of the phrase, which of the two meanings are preponderant, both should be kept in mind, as they suggest themselves in the original.

The point-form skeleton of the text is concluded by Schoenberg by a fairly large paragraph, which launches us into the nitty-gritty of the entire circulatory system of music and psychoanalysis, and it sounds curiously like a less sophisticated fragment of Nietzsche, in particular *The Gay Science*:

> I can only highly recommend to every musician to practice psychoanalysis. He can do this without concern, even when he is made fun of, because of it. Art is cheerful [*heiter*]: why shouldn't the artist cheer-up [*erheitern*] and say to himself that in itself the reverence which proves the stupidity of a good thing cannot be harmful, otherwise all the good things would have been harmed a long time ago. And: what damage is it to him, the harm of a good thing? Art is cheerful and maliciousness is also a good thing. Even if psychoanalysis does not prove of much use to one's own self, one can with its help, still damage the competitors very easily. And that is worthwhile! (ibid.)

The satirical tone here is unmistakable, but there are also some interesting clues as to the kind of practice that the musical science, i.e., harmony, is to take, if it wants to survive, or be true to its own name. In short, it is to be painted with light-strokes, acquire the transparency and grace of deliverance from its own truth, resulting in a music 'paroled' from its standard harmonic identity. This type of science is to become cheerful not in its mood, not as something that one merely amuses oneself with (since this is what

Schoenberg, in actual fact, is criticizing) but in its technique, which offers one the possibility of accuracy and efficiency, that does not eliminate the libido, or the pleasure of creation, from it own confines.

The text proper of the sketch for an essay on music and psychoanalysis begins with the question of biography and history, their description and mutually reinforced support system (like artificial respiration) which promulgates a way of dealing with the present through the past. It is an issue of heritage and tradition, important to both Freud and Schoenberg, but which here, appears to be a self-aggrandizing deception, the type that could fit under the rubric of neurosis, or exaggerated feeling of self-importance (both of which appear on Schoenberg's list of the terms that he will eventually work into the argument):

> To live and to let live: one has to encourage one's biographers. Without the description of life, maybe one has not lived at all; that's why a bad or even an unfavourable description, is still better than none at all. But when I have nothing to offer to my biographer, he has also nothing for me. In general, artists should consider their biographies in as broad a manner as possible. They are so well predisposed to it, in any case, that they can not go astray. I have always observed that the mediocre know much better, how the brilliant would have to behave, that is why I am often astounded how badly they let themselves be led… A far-seeing artist will therefore not let the opportunity slip by to make his life worthy of a story, but he will also be much more laborious in making his work open to interpretation, much interpretation. He will perceive [?] that to the many books must be added: "N. N. and his most intimate secretes, which he himself would not entrust to friends" the countless works about the theme of "most intimate secretes, which he has not dared to admit to himself".
>
> And who should write these, if one does not leave any reasons behind for him? Domain over domain of reasons – soon to come into fruition. But encourage your biographers and you can still experience your belated fame. Vivisection can as much advertise the one on whom the vivisection is performed, as the one who carries it out. (ibid.)

This last sentence should remind us of Strindberg, given the already established influence of this literary figure on Schoenberg (as we will remember, Strindberg published two sets of essays, entitled *Vivisections*, in 1877 and 1894, respectively). It is after this attempted and, one must say, quite an ambiguous engagement with the idea of personal history, its interpretation and its informative structure, both deleterious and necessary, as it seems, that Schoenberg takes on the theme of psychoanalysis directly. Through this kind of detour or delay, it almost seems that Schoenberg is learning to think psychoanalytically on the fly, progressively narrowing and condensing the contours of certain thought processes, that lead from the personal history, and its artistic expression as a symptom (and could not all biographies be described as symptomatic?) to a system of logic that is enclosed in its deeper recesses, inadvertently mimicking Freud's intellectual path, albeit on a different scale.

In case I be accused of reading too much into such an unformed text, let me simply say that the nascent state of the essay imposes and at the same time allows for such an elevated interpretive approach, and that the significance of these few pages lies as much in the stored potential intellectual energy, as it does in what it actually says, or what we can make out of it, given its particular topic. And the text gets more interesting as we go along, since at one point Schoenberg states the thesis he is attempting to explore unequivocally:

> I do not understand much about psychoanalysis or in other words just as much as those who talk about it. There is no reason then that this should keep me from writing the desired article on the "Psychoanalysis of Music". (ibid.)

Just a paragraph above this proclamation, the issue of vivisection, of an analysis that dissects as it elaborates upon the meaning of one's own artistic personality, is treated with the air of caution:

> But here one should guard against one error: the problems that underpin such fame [the fame one achieves through a constructed biography] should not steer [?] the author off course [*beisteuren*] since he has to remain beyond reproach: otherwise the art of autopsy in the discovery of problems could not actualize itself! Problems which the author could offer himself must remain unreported: the law of offer and inquiry! No inquiry about the offered problems... Inquiry does not like to let itself be outdone by an offer. (ibid.)

If we assume for a moment, that Schoenberg indeed had not read Freud,[165] or any other psychoanalytic literature (and we have no reason to think otherwise) then the above observation is all that much more astonishing, because it matches Freud's justification for not revealing too much of himself in the course of analyzing his own dreams on the pages of *Traumdeutung*. As we know, Freud stops short of dissecting his own self, because such action would not only reveal too much about his own personal life, but especially because such a revelation, an autopsy taken down to the last cell of personality would interfere with the science in psychoanalysis, making the theoretical task so carefully balanced and tediously fought for, into a literary genre of a memoir. It is not only and simply remembering that counts (speaking psycho-analytically) but a remembering that comes on cue, as it were, at the correct time, so that through the act of remembrance, one can also dispense with its burden. In this sense, remembering too much about oneself during the theoretical presentation of the system could hijack the narrative giving it a skewed, weighted scale that would entice one to register the deception, instead of the mechanism for its strategic use. And it is indeed interesting, that what Schoenberg is really expressing in the form of the caution not to offer too much of oneself to one's biography or biographers, is the issue of consciousness in artistic creation; something he will attempt to mitigate and diminish through the kind of materialization that his idea of sound, will progressively assume in his own music.

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[165] About reading and books, Schoenberg writes the following, in a letter to Hugo Leichtentritt: "I am no 'reader' and therefore actually know the following books only superficially [a short list follows] and in most cases only certain sections, out of context. Nevertheless I remember many a good idea" (*Letters*, p. 207).

We have already established that the theme of dissection and autopsy, the process of surgically getting underneath the many layers of stunted experience, is quite prevalent as an expression of force and the radical approach, in the turn of the century's 'intellectual vortex'. We see that Schoenberg is prone to use a similar language, and should also be aware that his first opera *Erwartung*, is already a simulated vivisection. It is perhaps also not a coincidence that the librettist, Marie Pappenheim, is not only medically trained, but a poet who takes up the imagery of cutting through experience, in one of her poems which appeared in the pages of Karl Karus' *Die Fackel* – the poem's title is similarly appropriate: *Der Seziersaal* ('The Autopsy Room').[166] Freud makes such an approach quite decisively and almost as a matter of fact, not only in his comparisons of the psychoanalytic practitioner's role to that of a surgeon in his more mature writings on technique, but sees it already at the beginning, as a necessary attitude towards dreams: "The task which was imposed on me in the dream of carrying out a dissection of *my own body* was thus my *self-analysis*" (SE 5: 454).

The act of slicing through experience, then, is not simply a metaphor, a heuristic device, but a new instrument, that combines sensuality in certain, appropriate proportions, and administers the instrumentality of such newly-found, functional congruence to whatever it is that one finds under the immediate province of investigation. It is an instrument akin to a medical stethoscope, which combines the senses of touch, hearing and sight, into a 'multi-media' approach to the physical realm of the body or reality in general. We know that Schoenberg is as tactile (through his many artisan-like activities) as he is aural, and we are also reminded of Freud's touch, the application of his hand to the patient's forehead as the very early psychoanalytic procedure that is to stimulate investigative efforts, which are only then translated into the auditory key. Another way of thinking about this, is through the technical process of amplification, i.e., of strengthening and of elevating certain hidden organic impulsivity, which allows one to identify not previously registered traits and conditions. This applies as much to psychoanalysis as to Schoenberg's musical procedure.

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[166] *Die Fackel,* 30 April, 1906, p. 23.

The above introduced dichotomy of offer versus inquiry, is the crux of the matter since it is the version of Nietzsche's (as well as Freud's and Hamlet's) observation that knowledge kills action, given that it interrupts an inquiry, since once the state of knowledge is achieved, inquiry is deemed to be unnecessary, as something that has outlived its purpose. To arrive at a state of being knowledgeable, is to enervate the prospect of new information gathering (at least for the time being) of blocking its drive-shaft, since knowledge demands acceptance. Knowledge as we learn from Freud and he from the symptom-building of his patients, presents one with a wall of resistance, because it interrupts questioning, if not making it altogether impossible, thus 'molesting' the flexibility of reality with the indecency of certainty. It is this kind of knowledge, in the form and shape of tonality that Schoenberg reacts against, and his quest, almost immediately, is liberation of inquiry. On this most elementary level, there can be no closer kinship between the two men. In this sense, the artistic personality, whose blueprint, as I attempted to show previously, is locked in the standard psychological apparatus of the ego as its unacknowledged volume of potentialities, places itself very closely indeed to the structure of the psyche, its 'soul', a fact of which Schoenberg is aware, given that he is also a composer, and hence works with materiality in a more volatile state of pliability (i.e., the tone):

> What is more intimate, as to say to oneself: as unintelligible and incontrollable as the psyche [*die Seele*] is only the worst and first of all the best music. And motivating factors. Ach, which motivating factors are given to music! How one can engross oneself in them! How one could lose oneself in them!
>
> A musician, and in general an artist, of course on various levels is a genius. At least that! Who then, should possess the noteworthy soul [*die Seele*], if not the little genius who can afford the best of the best. It is then the case, that to be without ponderous psyche is unthinkable and no expression of genius has the right to remove itself from the research methods of psychology [*Seelenkunde*]. Science above everything else! (*Psychoanalyse und Musik*)

The rugged state of the text, which in some parts is even more fragmentary in the original, is as frantic as the experience which it attempts to approach. For it relates the phenomenon of music to psyche and determines that the two are incompatible biographically, that is on the surface. There can be no compatibility because biography usurps reality for it own aggressive purposes, or said in a lexicon that our narrative had already established, biography displays all the calamity of individualization, thus falling into the trap of mannerism as symptom. Perhaps indirectly also, Schoenberg is reacting against the musical romanticism, which has the tendency to 'psychologize' events and feelings, blowing them up out of proportion. What needs to happen, musically speaking, is not an analysis of a completed piece of music that looks behind the notes for meaning and motivation, but a purification of technique, which could give both the composer and the listener, a more direct access to the flow of energies that are enclosed in sound.

That is why Schoenberg's music wants to and needs to dispense with style, just like the psychoanalytic patient must dispose of the symptom that had taken over disproportionately. A symptom is a compromise that displaces some of the tension originating in the unconscious onto other activities, objects, behaviours and phenomena. It is a stylistic solution to the problem of expression, but it also has the tendency to encamp itself in the psyche as the original formation, not the one which is simply responsive and transitory. Here, it begins to stand in for reality, thus progressing down the slippery slope, until it 'blossoms' into a fully formed psychotic situation, whatever the latter may be (usually, at least in Freudian scheme, neurosis). It is precisely tonality that had achieved the status of the symptomatic, due to its blind insistence that its harmonic rules are the only ones that procure access to the true nature of sound. And the only solution that is available in order to remedy the situation, is acknowledgement and oblivious ignorance as forgetting; a way of rejecting what tonality has to offer, of discarding its own biography that it desires to impose on the creative personality of the composer, in favour of a newly instigated (even if, of necessity, painful) tremolos of investigation and inquiry. Schoenberg says this, almost word for word, at the beginning of his 1934 essay *The Problems of Harmony*:

> We can say that in the development of art, it must always be as it is in Spring! One does what is necessary, though it cause somebody else pain; one does what the situation demands, unconcerned about the approval or disapproval of others.
>
> And the cause of music demands, as the history of art-battles shows, that the secret of the sounding tone be always pursued anew. The development of music is more dependent than any other art upon the development of its technique.[167]

Here emerges another one in a series of curious and beguiling correspondences (a series which will repeat itself consistently and take us to the end of this narrative) between Schoenberg's art of the tone and psychoanalysis, for the art of psychic interpretation (*Deutungskunst* in Freud's formulation) relies for its existence, perhaps more heavily than any other art or science, on reliability and consistency, i.e., constant development and almost a virtuosic calibration of its technique. Both psychoanalysis and tone-analysis (as atonality or the 12-tone technique) depend on their ability to pierce through the illusionary comforts of the symptomatic, in order to get at another motivating force, the plastic element that for the lack of a better word, is referred to as the 'unconscious':

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[167] Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, p. 269.

> This morning Görgi asked me why ornaments are so rare in modern music. I could not give him a satisfying answer. That people suddenly or gradually lost the taste for them – which is certainly true, at least in part – is, at best, a symptom; but it is probably nothing more than the formulation (for and by the ignorant) of the true (hidden) cause.[168]

Turning our attention once again to Schoenberg's drafted essay on psychoanalysis and music, we must perhaps admit that, the ironic and satirical tone of the text, is no mere ornament, that we might have underestimated its importance, and assigned it to the realm of the stylistic, too quickly; although, in all fairness, this assessment should and can only be made, at the end, when we have finished the process of almost 'pornographic' exposition of every sentence. And it must also be kept in mind, that Schoenberg's entreaty for disregard, his vilification of certain process as well as their unmasking, bears something of the symptomatic within its communicative marrow. This is especially evident in the following sequence of argumentation, which redresses the injustice, unfairness and often cunning calculation of the people Schoenberg had to deal with in his constant struggles for his own artistic and professional life (the question as to how much of this was warranted, and how much simply a paranoiac overcompensation, aside). To any artist, but especially Schoenberg, there is not a more accurate image, as the expression of this existential mixture of reality and angst, than the social type enclosed in the figure of the publisher:

> I am not a scientist, therefore I may proceed practically.
>
> Let's begin then with practicality.
>
> Safety first [English in the original]: what does a man wish to know from another most of all, if not, whether he is dealing with a friend or an enemy? If his opposition means everything that he says in such a friendly manner, or if he is hiding and hence promotes evil thoughts [?]

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[168] Schoenberg, "Ornaments and Construction", in *Style and Idea*, p. 312.

> Let us take one practical example. A composer wants to sell his work to a publisher, and in the process does everything to do so, is sweet, proud and confident, optimistic and business-savvy; what else would there be for the publisher to find out through psychology [*Seelenkunde*], if not the dammed composer is trying to pull something over his head?
>
> How simple! The composer merely plays a theme from his work and the badly educated in analytical technique publisher, follows him according to all the rules of science, and as long as the composer had in reality played conscientiously what is his own and not borrowed from a different sources, i.e., stolen, then the publisher knows right away, what he is all about and can protect himself, i.e., he offers the same disadvantageous contract, that he would have given without psychological analysis, but this time around supported by this science. This is comparable to an insurance company, which, thanks to risk-analysis is able to demand more than the mere business competence dictates. It is precisely here, that the necessity and practical application of analysis to the motivating factors of music, is exposed as far as the publisher is concerned. But I must admit that it is more important, for as far as I am a musician, I am driven by the class-consciousness and interests of musicians, to show the advantages that this kind of schooling, this kind of analysis offers to composers.
>
> For instance in the battle for art (*Psychoanalyse und Musik*).

It is at this juncture, where a progressive change in the tone of the text is implanted, growing to the measured proportions of quite a serious consideration of the connection between psychoanalysis and music. And, if we take Schoenberg at his word, if we accept that he is driven by something, whether by the interest of his art or self-interest, which in this configuration are practically indistinguishable, then we must also admit that the drive or instinct at the bottom of this exercise in self-analysis, is not unlike what we find in Freud – an overreaching entanglement in the recesses of time which motivates the general engagement with the interpretation of reality, that of music or psyche, or in fact, both of these together, for there is a repressed musicality in Freud, as there is symptomatic psychology in Schoenberg.

The progress of this extant and always impinging overcoming of previously set restrictions must be deposited in the incessantly irresponsible attitude towards factuality, if not its total disregard, a stance which Schoenberg appropriates, almost shamelessly: "…facts prove nothing. He who sticks with facts will never get beyond them to the essence of things. I deny facts. All of them, without exception. They have no value to me for I elude them before they can pull me down.[169] Of course, these words written in 1908, just after the infamous Gerstl episode in Schoenberg's life, could be simply assigned to the bitterness and invective inducement towards a forceful reconstruction of reality by an embattled love, and hence they might be less than honest philosophical statements, especially since the cooptation of Schoenberg's marital crisis into the statement, follows immediately: "I deny the fact that my wife betrayed me. She did not betray me, for my imagination had already pictured everything that she has done" (ibid., p. 54). Now, to consign this proclamation to the simply bitter wailings of a wounded lover and husband would be to eliminate their stability and rationality, their psychoanalytic colouring. But more important than this, is the fact of Schoenberg's own consistency in most of his proclamations, and especially this one.

We can see it clearly from the just quoted fragment about composers and publishers, and all this goes deeper, much deeper than the imperfections of Schoenberg's writing or writing in general are naturally inclined to present. For if Schoenberg's music is not simply sound (as we are increasingly learning), but something very much akin to Freud's oeuvre, insatiable philosophical, cultural as well as personal analysis underpinned by the 'bluntness' and danger of a psychology inscribed into musical resonance, then the scope of his art and its 'derangement' is that much more monumental. This composite snap-shot, taken and developed over time, which eventually explodes in the collage technique of the 12-tone method, is exposed by Schoenberg himself, already in 1909 in a letter to Ferruccio Busoni:

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[169] "Draft of a Will", in *A Schoenberg Reader*, p. 54.

> And thus I come to answer your other question: how much is intentional and how much is instinctive [in my compositions].
>
> My only intension is
> to have *no* intentions!
>
> No formal, architectural or other artistic intensions (except perhaps of capturing the mood of a poem), no aesthetic intentions – none of any kind; at most this:
>
> to place nothing inhibiting in the stream of my unconscious sensations. To allow nothing to infiltrate which may be invoked either by intelligence or consciousness.
>
> If you knew how I have developed, you would have no doubts. But I have prepared myself for this question and am thus able to answer it. I knew one would question the naturalness of my intentions, precisely because they are natural. That one would find them formalized for the very reason that I avoid anything formal.
>
> But when one sees how I have developed in stages, how I was long ago approaching a form of expression to which I now adhere freely and unreservedly, one would understand that nothing unorganic [sic], no "schmock aestheticism", is involved, but that *compulsion* has produced these results (ibid., p. 76).

The presence of Freud's drive-theory, its impulsivity and compulsive gambling with reality, especially or predominantly with reality and its factuality, are unmistakable here. Such 'therapeutic' predisposition is especially seen in Schoenberg's approach towards the raw material of sound and its historical/technical elaborations. Hence in 1948, looking over his shoulder and seeing his own biography, which as it turns out is inescapable (although one may and is allowed to abuse it) in a short piece entitled quite aptly *A Self-Analysis*, Schoenberg presents some startling formulations:

> Atonality or dissonance are no yardsticks for evaluation. Superficiality might base its judgments on such qualities… I personally do not find that atonality and dissonance are the outstanding features of my works. They certainly offer obstacles to the understanding of what is really my musical subject (Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, p. 77).

This understanding, like the always convoluted apprehension of the ego, the tension it mitigates between the two forces surrounding it (the id and the superego) is expressed in the form of a new and original *plasticity*, a procedure that allows for complexity to be manipulated, i.e., brought to a higher pitch by development, but also restriction and condensation:

> At the very start I knew that restriction could be achieved by two methods condensation and juxtaposition.

> Before I could master technically the difficulties of condensation and juxtaposition, I was forced by my destiny upon another road... I became the first composer in this period to write shorter compositions. Soon thereafter I wrote in the extreme short forms. Although I did not dwell very long in this style, it taught me two things: first, to formulate ideas in an aphoristic manner, which did not require continuations out of formal reasons; secondly, to link ideas together without the use of formal connectives, merely by juxtaposition (ibid., p. 78).

Schoenberg's description of a space that I have set out to designate as 'stethoscopic' corresponds very closely, to the kind of enclosure that is created by dreams (condensation, displacement, and juxtaposition are its main components) as presented by Freud, and established as the signature environment of the psychoanalytic practice. The connection between Freud's dream theory and Schoenberg's theory of harmony, their parallel identities, will preoccupy us a little further on. But for the moment, let us return to the draft of Schoenberg's essay on psychoanalysis and music.

After the satirical 'binge', Schoenberg sets himself the sober task of erasing factuality, or at least diminishing its importance; an undertaking, which, as we have seen, lies at the core of his general relation to reality, whether it is the technical matter of music, the general cultural environment, or personal affairs which must be squared off with the consistently irritating issue of individuality and especially its private biography.

After closing the always anxiety-ridden and unpleasant matter of dealing with publishers, Schoenberg begins to consider the potential relevance of psychoanalysis to music. The first step is to deal and eventually erase the impinging definition of what music is, by dismissing the importance of not only tradition as tonality, but also (and somewhat surprisingly) questioning the attractiveness and fashion of the various modern movements:

> Today, as in the past, in every art, there have been many 'movements'; modern, non-modern, classical, romantic, objective and many others. Each strives for its own place under the sun and each disciple, whether for his movement, or at least for his own creativity, seeks space, which he preferably wins by repressing other movements from the

> public's favour. But such repression is learned. Learned? The science takes care of that; that is its affair.
>
> How? Quite simply, as is already evident in the most difficult case.
>
> Let us assume that a composer, the inventor or a follower of the loosened Homophonic-Polyphony [aufgelockerte Homophonal-Polyphonie] is somewhat constrained by the still at the time popularized successes but since some time overtaken movement of "Counterpoint of Seized Curvatures" [Kontrapunktischen Kurven Ablockerung]. In that case, he can, quite simply, proceed in the following way: he analyses a 100 percent exemplary instance of such a style. For example a *toccata*, a *concerto grosso*, or a *partita*, in a word, a form, the meaning of which is unknown to any living being today. But not in the way that musicians have always done: in light of musical motifs, since moreover, music does not have these but according to hidden causes [*Hintergründe*], since, no doubt these it must have; something must be hidden behind such an incessant blather and bawling. A hidden cause [*Hintergrund*], and thus is factual surface [Vordergrund] feigned (*Psychoanalyse und Musik*).

We should interject at this point, and propose a further specification of the 'reality under assault' thesis, given that this theme has been the mainstay of our narrative from the beginning, and we now see that Schoenberg also finds himself under the sway of its compulsion.

The realization which gradually emerges, is the direction of how the world is supposed to be fixed, or maybe even better, to which elementary structure it is and must be affixed. For, Schoenberg does not reject the idea of a hidden or underlying cause *per se*, since he refers quite often in his explanatory notes about the process of his own musical creativity to the concept of the unconscious. What he questions is the misuse of such an informative depth, which psychoanalysis (as we will see shortly) does in fact have the potential to reveal, at least in some measure. This means, that the rejection he is so fond of (and not only on the most dramatic and professional level of replacing tonality with a different logic of how sounds should be combined) is an aversion to a dishonest justification of the status quo, for misguided reasons, most often political, in the nature of dispassionate administration of artistic principles or self-aggrandizing personal avarice. Schoenberg, then, is polemicizing against an artificial propping of reality (whether musical, cultural or personal) that, given its now acknowledged or at least indicated depth, cannot be justifiably prolonged and maintained. This is the only logical consequence of a mutually encrypting feeling of empathy (*Einfühlung*) with the unknown motivating factors, which make the factual reality into a reality under decay.

The potential for a saving grace, lies dormant in a sort of ruin (as was previously expressed) given that its parameters are always caught in the network of responses to a momentary reality, which at the bottom (if approached correctly) is also monumental. It is for this reason, that this type of reality must be always on alert, must be ready to readjust its representative expressivity, to yet again mitigate the tension coming from the direction of the unconscious forces of low-definition, at least when it works well, as we learn from psychoanalysis. It is now obvious, why Schoenberg's polemics is centered on the split between the two factors of *Hintergrund* (the hidden cause) vs. *Vordergrund* (the factual surface), and why he is voicing his displeasure (to say this mildly) at a certain, skewed ratio of how these two are related to each other; an equation which forges ahead blindly at 'neck-breaking' speed, without stopping and hesitating for a moment. For it is only such hesitation, the one that will eventually be interdicted in the 12-tone sound (and expectation is also, maybe even primarily such a hesitation, or at least the type of expectation we have been attempting to describe) which suspends in the moment of listening through its always unpredictable turn and the unforeseen pitch. This is the standard of evaluation that Schoenberg also applies to reality in general, evidence of which we are continually finding in his drafted essay on psychoanalysis and music, but not exclusively, and I will enlarge this circle of textual support, as we move along.

But the 'bottom-line' is this: reality which is always more than the surface would indicate ('*Vordergrund*', is Schoenberg's language) cannot be approached through the unequivocal justification of its dimensions, an extreme of which is the engagement in petty artistic-politics of movements, first and foremost, since the realization that there are other causes at play, must lead to the inherent insignificance of such surface and hence readiness for its eventual reconstruction. This is why, on the most mundane level, it is not specifically the question of political perpetuation of aesthetic causes, whatever these may be, but of the ill-gained spoils of why something should remain or be overcome. When such relegation to the outmoded is simply in the name of a trend, and for the simple reason of publicity, especially when certain principles of genuineness are used to justify it, that is when the gross perversion occurs. We see this from Schoenberg's life long attitude towards what others would say and have said, he disregarded, disrespected and wanted to eliminate, almost on a whim, for the sake of being merely radical – tonality.

As any well informed observer knows, Schoenberg accorded to the traditional tonal system of music all the possible respect, earnest consideration, and effort at gaining the skills to operate within it like a virtuoso, fluently and seamlessly, which gave him the ability of a skilful manipulator of standard harmony worthy of any great musician that came before him. The eventual need to break free from the tonal boundaries came from the internal logic of the system itself, not from the superficial phenomena of fashion or trend. This internal working out of tensions is the only way towards any discarding of the well-established, and it also takes much more effort, intense thinking and engagement with the supposedly well-known and entrenched factuality, than most of Schoenberg's contemporaries (especially the professionals in the field of music) realised and wanted to acknowledge. Here, once again, Schoenberg comes very close to what psychoanalysis endows with utmost importance, under precisely the category of *analysis*, of the incessant and prolonged 'getting at' what is seemingly not very responsive, the human psyche. It is perhaps for this reason, that Schoenberg drafted the essay that meant to deal with this exact issue – of how one analyzes effectively, genuinely and with lasting results, because the music that comes from under his pen (ear?) is most accurately described at long last, as such a stringent but also creative and constantly readjusted process of analysis of and in sound. The premise here, once things are taken down to their minimum requirement again, is a tremendous variability and illogicality of experience, which must be nonetheless gathered up and sorted. One way of doing this, is to encompass as much of such a variety as possible, a sentiment expressed by Schoenberg early on, in another letter to Busoni (August 18, 1909):

> It is *impossible* for a person to have only *one* sensation at a time. One has *thousands* simultaneously. And these thousands can no more readily be added together than an apple and a pear. They go their own ways.
>
> And this variegation, this multifariousness, this *illogicality* which our senses demonstrate, the illogicality presented by their interactions, set forth by some mounting rush of blood, by some reaction of the senses or the nerves, this I should like to have in my music (*A Schoenberg Reader*, p. 71).

It might be objected, that this statement, since it comes from the early expressionist period of Schoenberg's creative life, cannot withstand the test of time; that the composer soon thereafter, grows out of its somewhat 'childish' phase. Nothing could be further from the truth, and in fact, if anything, this sort of strangely strung emotionality, works itself into the mature 12-tone technique, and in this, Schoenberg inadvertently follows a path similar to that of Freud, whose early, emotionally overcharged observations, collected from the crucible of patients' symptoms, are eventually engrained in the minutia, complications but also non-negotiable tour de force of the technique itself – its various elements, that must be present and repeated in a strict line of investigative descent.

Continuing our analysis of the drafted essay, as we read on and interpret, it is clear that Schoenberg tries to zero in on the target of his investigation, the connection between cultural/professional reality and his own craft, more and more efficiently. He does so, by sharpening his definition and description of how reality is being degenerated and faked, because all we need is a mention of:

> The hidden cause and the factuality is feigned; and thus is the hidden cause repressed [*verdrängt*]. Through indifferent fussing about all types of highly charged ideas [*jede Art von bindendem Einfall*] the factual surface will lose sight of the fact that the author, fundamentally and deeply, is nothing more than a sentimental romantic who, ideally, would like to bring into expression beautiful, expansive and original melodies and moods. But he has inhibitions, is ashamed to show himself the way he is, and as all the factual surface (the Inferiority Complex without advancing further the formula of ascertainable=substantial) is to be taken less seriously, the more serious [Ernst] is the hidden cause, the conscious-unconsciousness. To take the latter according to its own energy, means that repression is not merely proven, but effected [*vollzogen*]. Entire, immense, world-shattering movements, did not they constitute not long ago the latest 'devilish' fashion, have been overcome in this way and now, out of currency, are compelled to give the genius of the next moment, his spot in the limelight.
>
> Not to displace the not so joyous task towards the end – for let it cost what it will, even nothing, to be optimistically and happily constituted – I want to say right away that I promise myself few advantages from the proof of abreacted [*abreagierter*] feelings, wishes, and the like (*Psychoanalyse und Musik*).

By now, it should be quite obvious, that Schoenberg's consistent use of psychoanalytic terminology is no mere accident, that he is more than just a leisurely consumer of its rhetoric. This is especially evident in the last sentence of the above quotation, which makes reference to the concept of 'abreaction'. The process of 'abreaction' is already described by Freud and Breuer in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895), and it means to tackle the always sticky problem of forgetting, and especially the interrupted sequence of natural 'wearing away' of feelings, meanings and explanations, which then coagulate into the structure of a symptom. Abreaction, in this sense, is the key to the psychoanalytic technique, because it attempts to effectuate what natural psychological processes could not, i.e. a creation of new associations, that would lower, if not eliminate, the bonding quality of psychic images that misremember, either through ignorance or exaggeration of the past. It might seem that if, as Schoenberg says, he does not believe in such a thing, he is against the nature and idea of psychoanalytic practice.

But here, we must introduce a further fine-tuning of our analysis, for it is the science of psychoanalysis, not its conceptual philosophy that are rejected. Now, to a purist, this kind of statement would not only be nonsensical, but simply impossible, since to a large extent, it divests psychoanalysis of its main attribute (the one that Freud had fought for so tirelessly), i.e., its praxis. Psychoanalysis put into a vacuum or a void, taken on the purely intellectual level, becomes (at best) merely a philosophy of the mind, not its science – a condition that Freud would have never accepted. But from our standpoint, such distinction is interesting, theoretically speaking, since it presses upon both music and psychoanalysis, imposing standards that are not purely their own and thus making them interact and form an unusual, if not an unwieldy alliance – an alchemy, of sorts, where the attractiveness of what sells itself as precious (and there is nothing deemed more arrogantly worthy than the classical art-music, especially in the Viennese setting) is not only exposed as corrupting, even debilitating, but something which must eventually be counteracted with a different metallurgy, a new mixture at the core of reality. It is here, where the logic of the fin de siècle finds its rhyme and reason, where it lives in the acidic environment of its own underground cave, which unlike Plato's, renders the enclosure, making it full of holes, like a grate. And what we should understand from this process of unmitigated and relentless juxtaposition of events, concepts, biographies, objects and phenomena (not only in this narrative, but especially historically speaking, from the perspective of the event of the *Jahrhundertwende* and its always volatile contents) is the forging of a new ability to produce experiences and the spaces that contain them.

Given, then, that experience must be broken apart and submitted to unrelenting scrutiny, Schoenberg continues in that key, finally arriving at another psychoanalytic figure, which will preoccupy him until the end of his exegetic sketch:

> Let us take apart here the difficulty.
>
> Who would benefit, after the analysis of the most deeply inspired symphony [*tiefernste Symphonie*] from the proof that its composer is honestly only 'married to his left hand' and that for all the rejection, all sacrifice, against all profit that this attachment, this overcompensated [unreadable word] has caused him, he in turn compensates by having his right hand leave a mark where he is most receptive, and through this ensure, that what he most gladly receives will quickly be lost again. Who, of all the people, would not see that such a strained honesty must be abreacted? And more still: who will gladly find out, that it had actually taken place? Who is it that allows himself to be robbed, without the necessity to believe in the ideals of others? Who is it that would not sacrifice himself with pleasure for this, if the way to abreaction would not be postponed for him? This is the wasp-nest. Better not put your hand inside! At this boundary even science should halt: it is best not to know anything!
>
> But things look differently with the Oedipus Complex (*Psychoanalyse und Musik*).

We will see in a moment how differently, indeed! But it is worth reiterating, what the above fragment, again confirms: that Schoenberg sees psychoanalysis as double, accepting one part, and in turn rejecting the other. The rejection takes place on the factual, surface 'altitude' and its therapeutic identity. This is the science of it all, the technique which meddles in the personal and private, that throws interjection into one's biography that must be dispensed with, given the spoiled part of this entire psychological exercise, i.e., the one that forces the personal psychology into a biographical setting; the one that demands and creates a biography and through it, and over-determined individuality. It almost seems that Schoenberg is espousing, and instinctively feeling, the

Freudian neutrality of the ego, where the self, as pure plasticity and a module which transforms the impinging forces of unknown origin is itself a resolution *through perpetuation of complexities* and not their dissolution. In such configuration, the ego would fulfill its own virtuosic functionality of artistically inscribed collecting – its ability to act as the bonding agent, the glue which oozes out the necessary chemistry, thus appropriating the seemingly disjointed, into a newly juxtaposed plane of encounter, one that goes under the name of dissonance (although in itself, this is only a label, as we have already learned from Schoenberg, whose maintenance, is nothing more than an epiphenomenon of the genuinely artistic project of bondage with an, as yet, unheard of, identity). Schoenberg does eventually arrive at such a conclusion, although hesitatingly, with many stutters in between. Here, then, is the remaining text of the drafted essay:

> It is difficult to think, that one could still have friends in life, if one wouldn't know that there is such a thing [as Oedipus Complex] and what it means.
>
> It is indeed unlucky when one is not born with something like that, or at least when one had not managed to acquire it, in the earliest years of one's life. Prosperity inserted belatedly, is not so good. Luckily, the good organization and wide dissemination of the modern cultural commodities is making sure that it is practically more difficult not to possess the Oedipus Complex, than to own an automobile. The mere thought of it, already works freely: every small problem can be subdued, every knot, every riddle solved instantly. Let us assume that a composer understands the logic of the theory of harmony [*Harmonielehre*] or tonality. But, alas, such an improbable assumption is unpractical – let us better say: Assuming that a composer listens to a good theme (listens to, and not hears, because the issue whether it originates in his memory or is there thanks to his own invention, is open): mixed it up a little, smuggled in one or two wrong notes, things like that happen fast; the standard tonal lineage [*abstammungsgemässe*] would become outdated, its creation time consuming, but still the wrong place for the wrong notes of the accompaniment is not found so quickly: what is the use of all recklessness [*Sorglosigkeit*] and all abandon [*Hemmungslosigkeit*], if one nonetheless comes up against a point, where it must be decided between Thebes and Corinth, where one is faced with the question: does it already sound adequately revolting, that one would consider it modern, or, even more irritatingly: does it sound finally so revolting, that one would consider it atonal? Did it pay off to suppress the ancestral harmony, to sully all pure relationships, is patricide worth it? Yes: pure relationships! There it is! Through such impure relationships, no harmony can be maintained, every dissonance turns into the Sphinx!
>
> The mere thought about the Oedipus Complex solves everything, as we said. A universal cleaning-agent [*Universal-Waschmittel*]: misplaced [*abhanden gekommenes*] ancestral feeling, destroyed family harmony, inversion of all natural relationships, an

> impostor [*unrechter Mann*] as unlawful spouse [*unrechter Gatte*], patricide: everything solved; the dirty laundry will be snow-white; the plaited tonality laid aside, the much promising heaps of meaningless tones: a sounding sour-cherry turnover [*Weichselzopf*]; the dissonant connection of confused origins, which still simulate one rule: --
>
> Wait, wait, wait!: I have promised too much; the idea of the Oedipus Complex cannot solve anything here, only entangle, and the only true word in the entire paragraph above, is the sour-cherry turnover [*Weichselzopf*] and I have realized this like in a dream only in the wake of [*im Gefolge*] other association-complexes.
>
> But once again: wait, wait, wait! For should things be thus [?]. The idea of the Oedipus Complex solves, in that it entangles. Entangled, if one does not take the trouble any more, to separate it out, when one lets it remain entangled – a Complex, then – is finally as simple as the dismantled. Analysis collects the disparate into Complexes.
>
> He, who in his good conscience has the currently popular courage to become conscious of the Oedipus Complex, is cured from his worries about the responsibility for the muddled [*durcheinandergeworfene*] family relationships of harmonies [*Verhältnisse der Familie der Harmonien*].
>
> The submediant, unnaturally in love with the subdominant, claims the prestigious tonic as dominant, on the basis of the same, eternal law, through whose violation [*Vergewaltigung*] it [the tonic] became a tyrant [*Usurpator geworden war*].
>
> This elevates creative courage and diminishes responsibility.
>
> A priceless spoils!
>
> Even before further conclusions.
>
> I can then, only well, say:
>
> Composers, expand your horizons, expand the field of your knowledge. (ibid.)

The tendency of this last fragment, its drive and the manner of its speech, are almost self-explanatory. We are being faced here, with an intriguing form of deliberate and quite brazen reclaiming of immemorial lines of descent, ones that violate and pervert the law of harmony, just like Oedipus did at a seminal point of history, even if that history be fictional, and especially so, since it is this elementary fiction at the core of its being, that encloses the possibility for a renewal, carries the burden and the potential of that plastic element which is the raw material of any future development. And it is not only the inherent violation or what in German sounds even harsher, the rape (*Vergewaltigung*) of eternal laws of harmony that is of significance, although its importance as a vehicle of release through boundaries that are overstepped and desecrated should not be underestimated. Rather, what is at stake, is a strange sort of stability, that collects things which naturally do not go together (of which the story of Oedipus is exemplary) into aggregates or complexes which take responsibility for their own innocence, their own ignorance and lack of knowledge; which pay and are voluntarily prepared to pay a high price, for their own lack of knowledge, just as Oedipus does, despite his best intentions. It will not be wrong on our part to conclude that Schoenberg likes the story and the message that it carries within its well-trodden paths of signification; for the convoluted nature of the almost misguided heroism, leads to action, the only genuine action and creation, because it exacts a price of undermining oneself.

If we take Stuckenschmidt at his word (*Schoenberg*, p. 21), and accept that partly because of Schoenberg's limited schooling he lacked the mythological repertoire of signifying symbols that one learned as part of the intellectual heritage (Schoenberg attended what is known as the 'Realschule', where practical education is emphasized instead of the much more intellectually oriented 'Gymnasium') then his engagement with the Oedipus story, the complex that it becomes in the hands of psychoanalysis and Schoenberg's deconstruction, or at least an attempted reworking of its symbolic matter, all this becomes that much more symbolic in itself. Being a highly practical man, who was consistently infiltrated by the economy of expression, whether in his music, his writing, or his 'architectural', artisan-like activities, it is hard to imagine that Schoenberg would have wasted time on a purely intellectual pursuit, for the pleasure of abstractly insulated thinking. Quite to the contrary, in fact, we may quite safely assume, that the draft of the entire essay on psychoanalysis and music, is a practical search for, if not the formula that can explain and further advance his musical 'actionism', then at least justify and rationalize it, via a connection to the grounding economy of transgression found in the deep recesses of the human psyche, of which psychoanalysis had become the most intense and best advertised expression. Of course, as we have seen, Schoenberg struggles against the acceptance, and eventually rejects the fashion that psychoanalysis had become, but he does take the 'energetic' model of the individual's psyche as formulated by Freud, seriously.

The seriousness of his engagement with the topic, comes through in the falseness of a choice one is forced to make, when deliberately attempting to 'spice up' standard harmonic relations, with a wrong note or two. Progressing along the line of such special effects, one is eventually faced with a decision, a wrong and an imposed choice, which is euphemistically represented by Schoenberg through the image of Thebes and Corinth. As we know from the story, Oedipus who grows up in the Greek city of Corinth (which, as it turns out, is not his native soil, a fact unknown to him until the last possible moment) feels compelled to abandon its normative comfort, due to a terrible prophesy that haunts the city and Oedipus, alike. The prophesy proclaims that Oedipus will eventually murder his father and marry his own mother. In trying to escape such a horrible fate, Oedipus sets out on the road, eventually coming to the gates of Thebes, which is guarded and terrorized by the Sphinx, ignorant that along the way, he had already fallen prey to the foretelling, killing a man in a highway brawl, who, as it turns out, was his father. The attraction of this myth, the same one that resonated with Schoenberg, is found in the idea of escape and prevention, for it is precisely because Oedipus makes this concerted effort to remove himself from the clasps of such a foreboding augury, that he in fact falls victim to it. This twisted logic, which confounds rationality and irrationality in a mutually reinforcing metastasis of right and wrong, traditional and novel, is the logic that Schoenberg sees as imperative to his own creative progression. The irresponsibility or the transgression that Schoenberg sees in the imposed choice between one or the other, can be transported to the wrongful act of dismissal of tonality, that a composer informed by the prophesy of being modern, or atonal (or anything along those line) sees as a vehicle towards fulfillment. A corollary of this, is the wilful 'creative' act which sees the realization of beauty, in the blind adherence to the norm and the traditional lineage. As we have already learned, Schoenberg does not espouse either position, and that is why he is able to say at the end of his career that neither dissonance nor atonality are good evaluation standards for his music, or even music in general. Rather, what is at stake is a development of a *new personality*, for which the law of inversion or deviation, so well prognosticated by the myth of Oedipus, is the modus operandi.

It is through the application of such a misguided and ill-informed standard of choice, that dissonance becomes the Sphinx, something that is not only puzzling and in need of a solution, but a monstrosity, which prevents one from entering the walls, and the riches of the 'fortress' music. Asking whether or not it actually pays off to suppress pure relationships, Schoenberg concludes with what seems like a contradiction:

> Did it pay off to suppress the ancestral harmony, to sully all pure relationships, is patricide worth it? Yes: pure relationships! There it is! Through such impure relationships, no harmony can be maintained, every dissonance turns into Sphinx! (*Psychoanalyse und Musik*)

For we might want to ask, which relationships is Schoenberg referring to, and where is the line drawn between the pure and the impure, between Corinth and Thebes? And ultimately, does not the impurity itself lie in the *division* between right and wrong, between following the lineage of the ancestral lines of descent and the logic of their violation inscribed in the law of incest? The stain of contamination is found in the markings of such a dichotomy, the fact that one needs to divide and break off, assign one action to a camp of legitimacy, and another to the 'no man's land' of contravention. This is how dissonance becomes the Sphinx, a figure that is puzzling and cruel, capricious and insolent, which guards the accesses to the city and devours anyone who is unable to answer the posed riddle, which in the myth itself takes on the shape of an encoded message about humanity: what walks on four legs in the morning, two at noon and three legs in the evening? Oedipus' clever response is simple: it is man who crawls on all fours in infancy, walks on two in adulthood, and uses a cane, in the old age. This is how Oedipus gains access to the city, and brings the prophesy full circle, for he is rewarded for his efforts with the hand of the widowed queen of Thebes, Jocasta, who in actual fact, is Oedipus' mother.

From Schoenberg's perspective, the story and the illustrative example of the Sphinx, as well as the further juxtaposition of these cultural symbols with the dissonant element, as one of the identity poles in musical harmony, goes to the heart of the matter of creation and compositional technique. Dissonance, through its elevated stature not only performs the act of guardianship over access to musical expression, but it is also its monster, its ostracized element, which always seems to stand in the way and present an obstacle. The trick, then, unlike the one Oedipus uses, is not to solve its riddle, or even account for the perplexity it seems to pose, but to eliminate it altogether and from the start, to erase it as a category of understanding. Hence Schoenberg's definition of dissonance as only a more remote consonance, or agreement among sounds, a definition which is already presented in 1911, at the beginning of the *Theory of Harmony*:

> Now if I continue to use the expressions 'consonance' and 'dissonance', even though they are unwarranted, I do so because there are signs that the evolution of harmony will, in a short time, prove the inadequacy of this classification... Since I still have to operate with these notions, I will define consonances as the closer, simpler relations to the fundamental tone, dissonances as those that are more remote, more

> complicated... Efforts to make use of the more remote consonances (today called 'dissonances') as artistic means thus led necessarily to many an error, to many a detour. The way of history, as we can see it in that which has actually been selected by practice from the practicable dissonances, hardly leads here to a correct judgment of the real relations (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 21).

It is only at this point that music is able to correct its own history, just like psychoanalysis does with the psyche through, among other procedures, the Oedipus myth. Only when reality is freed from its own other, its own deviant as an outcast and a threat, and uses deviation (since some is not only unavoidable but always necessary) and otherness as creatively invested and engendering efforts, will it gain some measure of existential reassurance. All this comes together in Schoenberg's explicitly drawn space of juxtaposition, which does not so much eliminate standard, family relationships of harmony, as works from the base of their non-existence as the norm, and hence (which amounts to the same thing) their strategic violation. It is only here, that the expectation and a possibility for a different personality can be attempted; a reformulated modern individuality that nonetheless belongs to the many, just like a tone belongs not only to the tonic or the musical key, but inherently and by association, to all the other possible tones, the twelve notes of the chromatic scale. And in this sense, we should always think of Schoenberg's music as a delivery system for messages that are not purely musical, but artistic (for lack of a better word), meant to express the shape and the new identity of certain, unspecified universal relations, just like Hofmannsthal's theatre is a double in the service of a higher purpose, or Freud's psychoanalysis (even though, Freud himself would probably hesitate before such an assessment, given his unrelenting desire for a science) which eventually contributes to the process of erosion of the ground on which psychoanalysis attempts to stand.

When Schoenberg refers to the Oedipus Complex as the 'universal cleaning-agent' in his essay draft, he is not approaching it theoretically, as a specifically applied condition of investigation, which then resolves all the unnatural relationships, bleaching them into a spotless, laundered materiality. Rather, he is observing an attitude of a genuine search, which, by its own endowment and character, must do violence to that which seems to be infallible, an attitude, which comes clearly from what Schoenberg says about the topic of theory, again in his *Harmonielehre*:

> I do not wish to quarrel with honest efforts to discover tentative laws of art. These efforts are necessary. They are necessary, above all, for the aspiring human mind. Our noblest impulse, the impulse to know and recognize, makes it our duty to search. And even a false theory, if only it was found through genuine searching, is for that reason superior to the complacent certainty of those who reject it because they presume to know – to know, although they themselves have not searched! It is indeed our duty to reflect over and over again upon the mysterious origins of the powers of art (*Kunstwirkungen*). And again and again to begin at the beginning; again and again to examine anew for ourselves and attempt to organize anew for ourselves. Regarding nothing as given but the phenomena. These we may more rightly regard as eternal than the laws we believe we have found. Since we do definitely know the phenomena [as facts] we might be more justified in giving the name, 'science', to our [direct] knowledge of the phenomena, rather than to those conjectures that are intended to explain them…
>
> If art theory could be content with that, if it could be satisfied with the rewards afforded by honest searching, then one could not object to it. But it is more ambitious. It is not content to be merely the attempt to find laws; it professes to have found the *eternal* laws (ibid., p. 8).

The danger, then, the recklessness of theorizing about what can only be lived, lies in the exaggerated promise, the promise enclosed in the poisonous gift (as it turns out) of universal laws. We can now clearly see Schoenberg's attitude towards the phenomenal or factual reality set aright and through it, we are able further to clarify his position as far as psychoanalysis and its main conceptual component, the Oedipus Complex, are concerned. For whereas, the conjectures about the factual "…too, have their justification: as experiments, as results of efforts to think, as mental gymnastics – perhaps sometimes even as preliminary steps to truth" (ibid., p. 8) their elevation to the unnatural position of dramaturgical mannerisms, which only play out the eternal directives of immutable laws, reduces them to the level of being mere ornaments. But factuality should be taken more sincerely than this, it should be accorded its own level of materiality, and hence a constructive as well as explanatory force. This is the only conclusion through which we can approach and make some sense of Schoenberg's earlier and much harsher statement about the denial of facts, for what he denies is not the phenomena as facts but their false identity, as something that is by default, at odds with a realm seemingly beyond their influence. Thus emerges another parallel between Freud and Schoenberg, the psyche and music, since, in his most literary works, the mytho-historical-cultural, as we can say somewhat clumsily, Freud proposes that the nature of the unconscious is reflective of what once had been a practice, meaning: the unconscious is built up from what once existed on the surface, as reality.[170]

Returning to the discussion of the Oedipus Complex as presented to us by Schoenberg in his drafted essay, the proposition that it is a 'universal cleaning-agent', this and only this, and that its only use-value lies in its identity as a chemical solvent, which is able to rescue reality from itself, is to misrepresent the factual, especially the core of what factuality should be: a reality that deviates, for it is only in such a deviation that facts come into themselves, and find their own, independent identity, which can serve as the springboard for progress, as yet another reconciliation. This is why, Schoenberg arrests the analysis, and forewarns that the promise of the Oedipus Complex as a ubiquitous self-help tool, if this is indeed what one is looking for, as the consumer of intellectual ideograms (whether the lay public but also and perhaps especially the music professional) is in fact prone to do, cannot be the organ of knowledge or readjustment. Such thinking, only corrupts the promise of the complex, entangles it in the web of its own complications, its own deception and lies, since consumption is not an act of simple appropriation, but a skill in perception (one must learn how to be a consumer – Loos). Interestingly, Schoenberg here says, that all this came to him via other associations and their complexes, like the ones found in a dream ('*und das ist mir auch nur in Gefolge anderer Associationenkomplexe wie im Traum eingefallen*'). We will speak shortly and quite extensively about Freud's dream theory and Schoenberg's theory of harmony, for they indeed operate in and design very similar spaces of flows and exchanges of communication, or maybe even one space, since the logic at the bottom of their functionality, seems to be the same. For now though, let us move forward, to another point of hesitation, for after removing the certainty of the promise, of how much or rather what can be accomplished, Schoenberg once again raises his hand in the arresting motion, finally concluding that the Oedipus Complex solves through entanglement, and this is why analysis is able to bring together "the disparate into complexes". The weight of this last formulation is indeed imposing, since it basically explains Schoenberg's mature art, its theory and technique of composition.

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[170] In *The Ego and the Id*, Freud writes: "The experiences of the ego seem at first to be lost for inheritance; but, when they have been repeated often enough and with sufficient strength in many individuals in successive generations, they transform themselves, so to say, into experiences of the id [the unconscious], the impressions of which are preserved by heredity. Thus in the id, which is capable of being inherited, are harboured residues of the existences of countless egos…"(SE 19: 38). On the issue of inheritance of psychic process, see also *Totem and Taboo* (SE 13), especially pp. 158–159.

The 12-tone technique as well as its earlier atonal condition, does precisely that, i.e., it collects notes that have lost their native environment of a key, and hence do not belong anywhere, into new complexes, new relationships that seem (to those that are interned in the unbreakable bond with the norm, in this case tonality) not merely vagrant, but perverted, an abomination of natural sound. The parallel sequence of events to the Oedipus myth, of arrivals and departures, of loss and acquisition and the confusion between the native/original and the acquired, are easily glimpsed. This is in part why, the story, especially as it is taken over by psychoanalytic practice which also combines elements that are fundamentally at friction with each other, is so attractive to Schoenberg. Simply put, it is able to represent in economical and efficient imagery, what otherwise likes to show itself only as hopelessly convoluted. In this, the idea of a complex, taken on a more abstract level as a form or a formula, provides a solution even before a puzzle is encountered, arriving at an answer outside of the logic of a riddle, a sentiment that again is expressed by Schoenberg in the pages of his *Theory of Harmony*, in the Preface to the first edition of the book:

> There is a mechanical puzzle that consists of three small metal tubes of different diameters sealed in a glass-covered box. The problem is to get the smaller tubes inside the larger. Now one can try to do it methodically; then it usually takes quite a long time. But it can also be done another way. One can just shake the box at random until the tubes are inside one another. Does that happen by chance? It looks that way, but I don't think so. For an idea lurks behind this method. Namely, that movement alone can succeed where deliberation fails (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 2).

Even if one assumes that the puzzle, as a problem, precedes the solution in time, it is the process of non-acceptance, of disregard to consider the puzzle in it own identity, not to accord it the respect and seriousness of a problem, that resolves the complication – a sentiment that Schoenberg expresses clearly in the drafted essay, which comes to the fore in the conclusion, that a dissonance mistreated, i.e., a dissonance that is given too much respect, becomes what it should not be, a norm of violation of other rules which should not be contravened, hence reshaping itself into the figure of the Sphinx. Whereas the seemingly irresolvable quandary is pre-empted and outfoxed by movement which operates according to chance and expectation, a solution that will be arrived at according to a mere momentum and the natural inclination of phenomena – a procedure which dominates Schoenberg's attitude towards sound and composition. And hence, the concluding remark in Schoenberg's treatment of the connection between psychoanalysis and music, which re-emphasizes the irresponsibility towards neat enclosures and solidly formulated divisions, of which, in the popular parlance, the Oedipus Complex is made the overseer and guardian:

> He, who in his good conscience has the currently popular courage to become conscious of the Oedipus Complex, is cured from his worries about the responsibility for the muddled [*durcheinandergeworfene*] family relationships of harmonies [*Verhältnisse der Familie der Harmonien*]. (*Psychoanalyse und Musik*)

Whereas, contrary to such psychological cosmetics, the Oedipus Complex taken according to it own valance and potentiality, according to its own energetic signature, presents the possibility for cross-infiltration of realities, in their own pure aestheticism (without theoretical/moral judgement as to their appropriateness). That this is indeed what is meant, can be glimpsed from a very drastic statement, found in a footnote, once again in Schoenberg's principal theoretical work. The astonishment for us, and especially for those who have read the work for the first time, is that much greater, because what is under pressure of extreme doubt, and what is treated, if not mistreated, is the most sacred distinction, without which, music, as we know it, cannot be imagined. It comes in the course of Schoenberg's discussion of obtaining better harmonic chord progressions:

> Merely in order to retain the metaphor of rising and falling intervals, I speak of the *ascending* interval as a fourth *upward* and of the *descending* as a fourth *downward*. (This is only a metaphor, as is our designation of pitches as high and low. Since the tones are literally neither high nor low, we could just as well express this distinction by means of other antitheses: for example, sharp and blunt, short and long, etc.) (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 116).

The distinction between high and low, just like the artificially introduced contrast between consonance and dissonance, usurps the power and freedom for evolving definitions, hijacks our ability to be neutral and thus in the state of highly charged malleability, which is always ready for new combination of elements. And indeed, as we have seen, this is the final accusation that Schoenberg throws in the face of tonality, which elevates the tonic, to a position of a dictatorship:

> The submediant, unnaturally in love with the subdominant, claims the prestigious tonic as dominant, on the basis of the same, eternal law, through whose violation [*Vergewaltigung*] it [the tonic] became a tyrant [*Usurpator geworden war*]. (*Psychoanalyse und Musik*)

The perversion here is the replaying of the Oedipal drama, on a different scale, or in fact, in the musical scale, where tones are combined according to artificially erected familial relationships, acquiring the aura of immutable legitimacy. The elevation of the tonic (the first note of a musical scale which gives a piece of music its key, for instance C-major, a-minor, etc.) to the highest indicatory value, where it is able to usurp the power, and exercise control over the entire musical range, is in itself, according to Schoenberg, something close to musical incest. So it is the instantiation of regularity, of presumable correctness of behaviour and strictness of interactions, which are abnormal distortions of the otherwise much more fluid and forgiving reality, not as is the case in the Oedipus myth, their violation. If we look at the specifics of how Schoenberg translates the Oedipal myth into technical terms of harmony (the submediant or the sixth degree of the musical scale, in love with the subdominant or the fourth degree which uplifts the fundamental tone or the first degree into prominence) then we can surmise (through one possible, but most likely interpretation), that Schoenberg is actually describing, what is known in standard harmony as the six-four chord.

If we follow Schoenberg's discussion of this harmonic configuration on the pages of the *Theory of Harmony*, we will learn that the chord (already an inversion of the most basic musical triad, built on the tonic) is a musical complex with an identity crisis, and that its assignation in support of the fundamental tone, and hence reinforcement of tonality, is in itself a somewhat forced manoeuvre. The standard musical triad (the most basic relationship of three tones 'stacked' one on top of the other two and sounded simultaneously) preserves specifically calibrated distances between the pitches – accurately measured out intervals. (And as a caveat, we see that if harmony is in fact a play with and among distances, how the image of familial connections, is in fact quite appropriate as a general description for their behaviour, or misbehaviour). In any case, the six-four chord stretches these distances of affiliation, displacing the fundamental tone or the root (which is the most direct way for a piece of music to acquire its tonal identity) from the position in the bass (or the lowest pitch, at the bottom of the chord) and thus also scrambling other relations, which are now six and four steps away from each other, as opposed the much closer three and three (major and minor third). In this sense, what is being perpetuated here is, if not a patricide, then certainly a serious challenge to the father, the fundamental tone, which (according to the most basic rules) is always the lowest tone. Now, of course, inversions are accounted for (permitted and expected, although very stringently regulated) in the setting of Western musical harmony, even though:

> Any setting of a chord that has the root in the bass imitates most closely the acoustical relation of the tone to its overtones [and] [o]nce we put another tone in the lowest position, we depart from the natural model (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 53).

The six-four chord (which, technically speaking is already a second inversion of the most fundamental triad), because it re-arranges and complicates distances among the family of pitches that comprise it, is also more ambiguous, i.e., perceived on certain occasions as more or less dissonant, for given the traditional view:

> A unique claim is thus made for the fourth [one of the defining distance-components of the six-four chord]: that its two tones form now a dissonance (when the lower tone is in the bass), now a consonance (when it is 'covered')… (ibid., p. 75).

Not to get overly caught up and lost in all these technical matters, the point here is that harmony, which is the system that maintains, regulates, preserves and erases relationships of distanciation among sounds, feels the need to unnaturally bolster some, at the cost of repressing (covering over, masking) others, resulting in friction between the surface or the form and the deeply-seated workings of a musical complex. The six-four chord is one of the most vivid instances of this slight-of-hand, because it embodies "…a conflict between its (outward) form, its sound, and its (inner) constitution" (ibid., p. 76). We will right away notice that the conflict between the outward form and the inner constitution is the axis on which the psychoanalytic model of the mind, also finds its stability. Schoenberg uses similar sounding metaphors and grammatical locutions throughout the work, one of which is found in the course of his treatment of the aforementioned chord, which concludes that the resolution of other dissonances, apart from the simulated one of the six-four chord (since the chord in question, is not a pure dissonance, strictly speaking, but only perceived as such on certain occasions) "…has a different psychology" (ibid., p. 77).

Speaking in such psychological terms about music in general or its technical minutia, the conclusion is, as we see above and can further glimpse from Schoenberg's essay, that the imposed form (the psychology of tonality) which in Freudian terms plays the function similar to that of the super-ego, contradicts and represses the depth-psychology of inner drives (Freud's id), a play that repeats itself throughout the musical genre, its theatre of operation, perhaps nowhere more clearly than in the peculiar circumstances of the six-four chord:

> The six-four chord, whose problem could be felt but not understood, was always treated in a special way. This fact alone would have been enough to give it a unique position... But whether its unique position has its origin in convention or in nature, that position is nonetheless quite definite. And since in practice the chord was always regarded as a singular phenomenon, to be used in a special way, since particular events always preceded it and particular events always followed, it has an effect similar to that produced, say, when part of a popular quotation is cited: 'Love conquers...' – one fills in what comes before and after. The merest hint at the well-known cause awakens the expectation of the well-known effect. With the first word we understand; we then await a particular continuation. This is how the cliché, the formula works. The six-four chord developed into just that, a permanent formula with the effect of a cliché; one cannot imagine its occurring out of the accustomed context (ibid., p. 76).

The clinching point is an already familiar motto, because: "...the conflict in the six-four chord and its tendency toward resolution are not absolutely compulsory; one does not have to give in, for nothing more than overtones support this tendency" (ibid., p. 76), just like standard family relationships are supported by nothing more than social conventions.

What is it, then, that is at work in Schoenberg's cultural, creative and musical *Weltanschauung*? The easiest way to describe the logic of his *Tonkunst*, is through the principle of association which *inverts* what is ossified and encrusted in the shells of normality. In this, by Schoenberg's own pronouncement "music is comparable to a gas, which is in itself without form but of unlimited extension" (ibid., p. 127). This means that the encounter between forces and events is expandable, almost to the point of infinity, and that the task of art, especially music, is to capture this moment of the potentially limitless effusion, just like dreams always renew their material, through a representation that spills over the previously set communicative boundaries, especially those of established decorum:

> And – without saying that the ultramodern music is really atonal: for it may be perhaps that we simply do not yet know how to explain the tonality, or something corresponding to tonality, in modern music – the analogy with infinity could hardly be made more vivid that through a fluctuating, so to speak, unending harmony, through a harmony that does not always carry with it certificate of domicile and passport carefully indicating country of origin and destination (ibid., pp. 128–129).

A homeless, vagrant harmony, then, which had lost its coordinates and subordination (even if unknowingly) to certain intractable regulations, just like Oedipus' setting out on the road, his losing-gaining and then losing again the hospitality of domicile and the reassurance of familial homogeneity. And should we really be surprised that Schoenberg writes this already in 1911, an opinion (or more accurately a complex of conceptual formulations) which exists in a more or less complete form, without giving us the name of Oedipus and his complex, as is done in the drafted essay on psychoanalysis and music from 1932? Perhaps not, since Schoenberg, not unlike Freud, always operates through stages of completion, where the maturity of the entire system, shows itself in the nascent state of variable emphasis. Hence, we can venture out, and propose to those who feel adventurous enough, that the *Harmonielehre* is already written psychoanalytically, or at least that it employs a similar image-palette, similar logic, which is also an indication, that both Schoenberg and Freud, are simply responding in a similar manner, to forces beyond their control, the logic of their times. Whichever way we slice this, here is another textual anchorage point, in support of such an assessment:

> Up to now music had the possibility of drawing such boundaries [of observing the conventions of form or style] through adherence to the laws of tonality. I have said earlier that I do not hold tonality to be a natural law nor a necessary prerequisite of artistic effectiveness. The laws by which tonality itself comes about are then still less necessary, far less; they are merely the simple exploitation of the most evident natural characteristics; they do not teach the essence of the matter but merely aim at the orderly and mechanical elaboration of a device that makes it possible to lend musical thoughts the aura of completeness (*Geschlossenheit*)... Since indeed all the simple relationships derive from the simplest natural aspects of the tone (from its first overtones), the fundamental tone then has a certain sovereignty over the structure emanating from it just because the most important components of these structures are, so to speak, its satraps, its advocates, since they derive from its splendour: Napoleon, who installs his relatives and friends on the European thrones. I think that would indeed be enough to explain why one is justified in obeying the will of the fundamental tone: gratefulness to the progenitor and dependence on him. He is Alpha and Omega. That is morally right, so long as no other moral code obtains. Yet, another can indeed prevail! If, for example, the supreme lord becomes weak, and his subjects strong, a situation that arises only too often in harmony... It is superfluous to hark back every time to the ancestors, to show every time

> with utmost thoroughness the derivation of chords from the fundamental; it is superfluous to prove their lineage every time when it is familiar to everyone and lives in everyone's memory and sense of form… And whenever we let our imagination roam, we certainly do not keep ourselves strictly within boundaries, even though our bodies do have them.
>
> The sense of form of the present does not demand this exaggerated intelligibility produced by working out the tonality. A piece can also be intelligible to us when the relationship to the fundamental is not treated as basic; it can be intelligible even when the tonality is kept, so to speak, flexible, fluctuating (*schwebend*) (ibid., pp. 127–128).

Eventually, the fluctuation at the core of Schoenberg's musical technique, will acquire its own parameters, its own evenness of progression and suspension, through the expectation and calibration of the 12-tone system, which makes it comparable to one of the mainstays of Freud's analysis, what he calls the '*gleichschwebende Aufmerksamkeit*' the evenly suspended (or evenly fluctuating) attention. But all of this is premised, in Freud as it is in Schoenberg, on the activity to which the composer is called, in the concluding sentence of the drafted essay on psychoanalysis and music: "Composers, expand your horizons, expand the field of your knowledge". For it is only such an expansion of knowledge (or more accurately, given the previously drawn distinctions, an expansion of inquiry), and hence the constant treatment of reality like with sand-paper applied to a smooth surface, that reverberates in the activity through which the detailed, singular and particular, whether a note or the individual, acquire the value of a meaning and a justification for their presence, since they are judged by the harshest standard of evaluation there is – by what lies beyond their native comfort:

> What is within reach has its temporary boundaries wherever our nature and the instruments we have invented have their temporary boundaries. What is attainable with the phenomenon outside ourselves, as far as the tone itself is concerned, theoretically speaking, has no boundaries (ibid., p. 319).

19. Conclusion: Interpretation of Dreams vs. Theory of Harmony

The King takes all my time; I give the rest to Saint-Cyr,
to whom I would like to give all.

But this declaration, which indeed was intended to win in order to give, won more than it gave: to him, who has everything, it can give as much but no more.

Two epigraphs mark the entrance into the trajectory of this concluding chapter. One comes from an unlikely source, and is meant to be a catalyst only, to help us 'get going', once again. The other is extracted from a place already familiar, made known through the sequence and the latest turn of this narrative. But even that familiarity, the comfortable gestation in its contents, the plateau of conceptual reprieve, turns out to be increasingly startling and deceptive.

Both of these textual markers are a sort of dedication, inscription that pronounces something, pays homage, perhaps, but cautiously, taking something away at the same time as giving. The one about the king comes from outside the time frame in which we have situated ourselves, and thus concerns us tangentially, not only because it speaks about a different history, but also given its literary/theoretical source that will not be treated directly, is at most only a symptom of the whole, in which we are now inextricably entangled, and into which we have to step again, for the final time. Both of these pronouncements, made on different occasions and for different purposes, have been transplanted here, to help us conclude, what needs and wants to be, at least on some level, inconclusive. The message carried in these two interpolations, interjections (which will be identified soon, but to counteract impatience, let me say, that one of them comes from Schoenberg) will only prove of some value to us, if they are able to fill out and saturate what otherwise likes to remain a skeleton, a translucent apparition, a revenant of an image of the fin de siècle. To grasp and get a handle on its ephemeral nature and to gain the benefit of a different measure, a new intervallic space, for even in music, or especially so, the intervals can always be seized up and ceased otherwise than what is assumed – by the standard of something previously unheard of:

> The tendency of something unheard-of to reveal itself to the searcher is just as great as is the tendency of the searcher himself to find something unheard-of. And in this sense every truly great artist is an impressionist: ultrafine reaction to the slightest stimuli reveals to him the unheard-of, the new (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 403).

The adoption of the 'unheard-of' element as the base of engagement with art (especially the art of sound!) as creative event, takes on the precepts of a different normality, an incalculable economy, according to Schoenberg, for:

> In music, along with the content of its smallest components (tone, tone progressions, motive, *Gestalt* [pattern, figure], phrase, etc.), there is an additional means of economy available, the possibility of sounding simultaneously. Perhaps for this reason it says more to everyone than do other arts (ibid., p. 389, note).

It is such alternate range of proportions and rations, a volatile economy of things, where two plus two does not equal four, that takes hold in Schoenberg: "That we name the interval c-g, five, does not mean that c-g is actually, in every context, five…" (ibid., p. 318). It is this kind of 'tipsy' logic that I have attempted to introduce, by quoting from two, as yet unidentified sources, at the beginning of this concluding chapter.

From the start, then, we are in the kind of space that Schoenberg identifies as his domain, a surface on whose premises things happen by being coated in their own sectarian logic, which is an analog of reality that otherwise presents itself unceremoniously, simply, as a matter of fact – that surface being a network of accomplished and possible juxtapositions. It is the ceremony, the awareness of how much is given, how much taken, and how much still left over for the giving and taking, that the first of our epigraphs, tries to calculate.

We are dealing here with an exergue itself which appears on the pages of Jacques Derrida's *Given Time*[171] and resonates with the impossibility of giving, or maybe the possibility of giving what, in the end, proves to be impossible. Of course, the ownership, is itself murky and tainted (just like the ownership of one's self in Freud or the art in Schoenberg), for the preamble itself comes from a historical source, a letter written by Madame de Maintenon (mistress of King Louis XIV) to Madame Brinon, taking account of the time deposited and disposed of, in the name of the King who takes all, and the donation of the rest, to the charity set up in her own name (Saint-Cyr is a foundation for education and edification of impoverished young aristocratic women).

I will not go into the specifics here of how it is that one can give what one does not possess, how is the 'all' distributed in a way, that after disposing of it in its entirely, there is still something left over to give? – Derrida performs this sort of analysis exhaustively and better that I am able to do, and in any case, all this will emerge via a more circuitous route, during our analysis of the emblematic space that the self is caught in – the space of the *Traumarbeit* and Schönberg's space as *Harmonielehre*, or a type of practical musicology, which favours active analysis and inquiry, over pure theory, which by itself is always deceptive and incomplete. But one can image the surprise and the intellectual intrigue that I felt, when encountering something quite similar in Schoenberg. For, I was faced with a familiarity 'pass its expiry date', something in the range of Freud's ***unheimlich***, and all this, in the course, no less, of reading a dedication to Gustav

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[171] Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I Counterfeit Money*.

Mahler, Schoenberg's own king, of sorts. It is a dedication which is given as it is also being taken away, the symptom of Schoenberg's peculiar brand of thinking, which (as we are increasingly learning) he shares not only with Freud, but the entire context of the fin de siècle, which is as intimate and snug as one's skin.

The issue, then, is a dedication that appears in 1911, in the first edition of Schoenberg's *Theory of Harmony*, which by the time of the second, 1922 edition, is treated in the following manner:

> The sentences which in the first edition accompanied the dedication to Gustav Mahler are now omitted as superfluous. They were words written in profound grief directly after Mahler's death... The declaration that 'He was an altogether great man', being unproved [at the time], thereby won very nearly the power and the repute of a prophecy. But this declaration, which indeed was intended to win in order to give, won more than it gave; to him, who has everything, it can give as much but no more (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 5).

The initial acknowledgement and declaration of Mahler's greatness, is entangled in Schoenberg's own biography, or at least, in a biography that is still to come, as a wish, whose fulfillment, will give pleasure not only to Schoenberg, but through him, especially to the unassailable image of Mahler, or his memory. The 1911 expression of admiration and unbreakable filial ties, in an abridged form, runs as follows:

> This book is dedicated to the memory of GUSTAV MAHLER.
> The dedication was intended, while he yet lived, to give him a little pleasure...
> Gustav Mahler had to do without pleasures greater than that which this dedication intended for him. This martyr, this saint passed away before he had established his work well enough even to be able to entrust its future to his friends.
>
> I should have been content just to give him a little pleasure. But now that he is dead it is my wish that this book bring me such recognition that no one can pass over my words lightly when I say: "He was an altogether great man" (ibid., p. 4–5, footnote).

Now, one cannot fail to notice here a psychology that later (or in fact immediately, for it is already evident in the pages of the book, which operates under the spell of this radical economy of giving) becomes the principle of creative production, which Schoenberg employs and applies to his treatment of sound-matter. We are witnessing here precisely the kind of representation that is irrevocably the signature of the psychic materiality, which Freud expresses simply under the heading of dream-work (*Traumarbeit*), and our analysis can escape the vacuum of speculation, and rest on the word itself, the one pronounced by Schoenberg, an exercise that will be repeated throughout these few concluding pages.

Coincidently, then, the first in the series of structural trusses, which I will introduce in the attempt to set up the plastic and undulating confines of what has already become known in this narrative as *the stethoscopic space of assonance*, comes to us via a conclusion, appearing at the very end of Schoenberg's book. The sanctuary of these last few pages deals with/in speculation; an image and a wish of being able to construct music from tones, that present us with a different identity than the one of a pitch:

> The distinction between tone color and pitch, as it is usually expressed, I cannot accept without reservations. I think the tone becomes perceptible by virtue of tone color, of which one dimension is pitch. Tone color is, thus, the main topic, pitch a subdivision. Pitch is nothing else but tone color measured in one direction. Now, if it is possible to create patterns out of tone colors that are differentiated according to pitch, patterns we call 'melodies', progressions, whose coherence (*Zusammenhang*) evokes an effect analogous to thought processes, then it must also be possible to make such progressions out of the tone colors of the other dimensions... That has the appearance of a futuristic fantasy and is probably just that. But it is one which, I firmly believe, will be realized. I firmly believe it is capable of heightening in an unprecedented manner the sensory, intellectual, and spiritual pleasure offered by art. *I firmly believe that it will bring us closer to the illusory stuff of our dreams; that it will expand our relationships to that which seems to us today inanimate* as we give life from our life to that which is temporarily dead for us, but dead only by virtue of the slight connection we have with it (ibid., pp. 421–422, my emphasis).

In other words, Schoenberg is expressing a type of plasticity as the *logic* that makes reality, especially the reality of art, vital, i.e. important and living. There is only one range of materiality that can satisfy such a desire and drive, the tone as the most malleable of all physical forces, but not in its current dimension which strangulates its full potential (for, in the name of pitch, it is allowed to move up and down only) but one that is liberated from its overarching identity, and catapulted into a reality of forces, flows and intensities. It is at this point that Schoenberg ejects himself from the comfort zone of mere craftsmanship in music, into new, elaborate boundaries that serve as the meeting point and the standard of evaluation for everything that matters, because it *is* matter, dissected through and through with a new stimulation of images that disregard convention and mannerism that had governed the way things should be combined – the logic of dream-work, *par excellence*!

We have been speaking about space for a while now, as the network or maybe even better, a mesh that underpins both the artistic and mundane realities, a space that is productive and enabling, becoming a realm emancipated from the ideologies that like so much (and practically speaking, they have no other choice) take refuge in at least one, but preferably all of its dimensions. When, historically speaking, a new aspect/perspective, a new dimension of space is 'discovered', this is an indication of nothing less than the attempted shedding of the old skin, of its encrusted, flaking 'dermatology', which had become too constraining and reductive (for instance, the shrinkage of space to two directions/dimensions in visual, painterly perspective, or the example of pitch which treats the tone, like in vice, mentioned by Schoenberg). The fin de siècle, deploys another in a series of such spatial re-configurations, not only in a more intense and vibrant 'stenography' (given all the avant-garde movements, all the 'isms') but on a truly revolutionary scale, because what is now assaulted and insulted, is the traditional abode of spatiality as the insulating agent, where man finds shelter; an erasure of space as registering surface, a ledger that simply reflects the preordained nature of the world. This much has been already observed, no better perhaps than by Henri Lefebvre:

> The fact is that around 1910 a certain space was shattered. It was the space of common sense, of knowledge (*savoir*), of social practice, of political power, a space thitherto enshrined in everyday discourse, just as in abstract thought, as the environment of and channel for communications; the space, too, of classical perspective and geometry, developed from the Renaissance onwards on the basis of the Greek tradition (Euclid, logic) and bodied forth in Western art and philosophy, as in the form of the city and town. Such were the shocks and onslaughts suffered by this space that today it retains but a feeble pedagogical reality, and then only with great difficulty...[172]

Even if we might consider the date given as somewhat arbitrary, for the breaking or shattering Lefebvre is attempting to pinpoint, was prepared a few decades earlier, there is no doubt that by then, something significant enough had occurred, a shudder whose violence reverberated throughout the shelter of domesticated political, social and artistic space, to be noticed and paid serious attention to. The cleft, which engenders serrated surfaces of communication, is already embodied in Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) and then later in Schoenberg's *Theory of Harmony* (1911) (based, of course, on our selective reading which skips many other instances that can be given, although these two remain exemplary). It involves a monumental redirection of perceptive attention, which displaces analyses away from merely approaching and analyzing objects, phenomena and events *in* space, and elevates space itself to the status of materiality that is to be analyzed, until something is finally wrung out of its hiding place, whatever that may be (the unheard-of element Schoenberg refers to, for instance). It is in this form and formula, that *analysis* and *space* are fused together, into a moment of interplay between distance and proximity, stability and crisis, identity and its loss, individuality and the self, etc. All these become so many symptoms of the formative logic that lies at the bottom of the fin de siècle, the logic of *plasticity*, which in its raw form must employ the entire sensory endowment of the human body, as well as the various technologies derived from it, in an unrelenting pursuit of more and more viscous material, which can yet again, be recombined with the general notion of space, as a simple topography of coincidences. It is in this meaning that I propose to employ and exploit the notion of a stethoscope and its circuitry of assonance (based on the procedure of juxtaposition of sounds in the familiarity of their resonance), as a device that combines the normality of standard sensory outlets into a paroxysm of togetherness, a procedure that stacks the senses one on top of the other, to be (in the manner of the musical tone) sounded together, in an analytical overture that combines touch, sight and sound, applied to the chest of the patient (*stethos*, or chest, from the Greek).

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[172] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 25.

We already know, that Schoenberg assigns to music a special status, precisely because of this natural ability to express and effectuate the mutual immanence of events, which put together, redraw the spectrum of perception (when done truly in a creative or artistic manner) into another viability, a more involved mosaic like structure, which rebuffs the otherwise mute and paralyzing economy of mere instrumentality. It is not then, that music is so binding and privileged from the start, but rather that it corresponds to a new logic of combinations, for which the blue print is the far-ranging, multi-media architectonics of the ear, something that, for lack of a better word, we could designate as a system (of the unconscious, atonality, etc.) that: "…reflects the way in which our ear draws analogies (*kombiniert*): it connects like things, it sets widely separated events adjacent to one another and adjacent events over one another" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 392). Or, in other words, it juxtaposes in the mode of pure and not pre-fabricated possibility which, like Ulrich, the hero of Musil's masterpiece *The Man Without Qualities*, wears the identity of individuality which is also (and above all) able to disregard its possessive qualities. Only in this manner, individualization has a chance to avoid the pathological situation (both socially and structurally/creatively) expressed in the perversion of the self into the anomic singularity whose impinging notion of ownership, leads it astray because it sabotages the possibility and freedom for spontaneous redefinition.

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Remembering Schoenberg's conclusion, right at the end of his long exposition concerning harmony, that a reformulated nature of the tone, could finally bring us closer to the "illusory stuff of our dreams", we can at last, bring these two (theory of dreams in Freud and theory of harmony in Schoenberg) together into an interactive setting, that will further draw the contours of fin de siècle's space, its anatomy that makes the usual boundary between the internal and external, between the inside and the outside, permeable enough, for this dichotomy to dissolve, with only a trace remaining.

Anyone who will give Freud enough time, will not be able to walk away from psychoanalysis without exactly that impression. The model proposed and carried out from the period of Freud's early writings on hysteria and onward, sometimes forced with a sledge-hammer blow, at other times only subtly intimated, is in one word *analysis*. In this, Freud is already exposing and popularizing (as well as inevitably expressing) the migratory nature of the concept. Such is the case, not only because analysis needs to traverse, move and circulate to perform its task, since it must be in the current or the blood stream, so to speak. The more crucial fact to notice is the social positioning of the analytical exercise, which is no longer the privileged intellectual domain of the few (the philosopher, the intellectual) but is displaced onto a larger cultural and social setting, where it is not a luxury, but an essential technique of interaction and social survival. The survival in question is the already familiar theme of individuality versus the social mass, and the placement of the self somewhere along the line of this spectrum. And we might remember, that Marx was one of the first observers to have noticed the necessary psychological component that goes into the making of a responsive collectivity (i.e., an aggregate social group that is individualized enough to lose the stunted character of a mass phenomenon, but also balanced enough for the self, and its necessary separateness, to find expression); he described it as 'class consciousness' without really giving a recipe for how it is to be accomplished, for the mere historical circumstances (in which Marx displayed so much faith) proved to be inadequate.

By the time of Freud's emergence on the scene, the formula becomes clearer. It involves nothing less than the simple *realization* of one's circumstances and positioning, arrived at through *analysis* – something that Marx had implicitly asked of the proletariat, and of which it proved to be utterly incapable, partly because it lacked the psychological language of self-expression, and all that was given, was the economic vocabulary of purely social forces (which after Durkheim's classical definition, are coercive forces, beyond one's control).[173]

But all this, can only remain a caveat in our inquiry. The essential point to be derived from it is that analysis becomes a mass medium of communication, which infiltrates all levels of reality round the turn of the century (including or especially art, which takes on the status of being the keeper and promulgator of analytical hermeneutics), with Freud and Schoenberg as the primary exponents in its exhibition.

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[173] See Emile Durkheim *The Rules of Sociological Method.*

The tone and the dream, then, as two platforms united by the similarity of their operational principles, become the thresholds of modulation, which mediate, bring to life but also reformulate enough, for the 'psychic happening' or the 'musical event' to find a ground onto whose shores they can at least be cast-away, i.e. emancipated from the muteness of the unconscious, but also prepared for the engagement with reality, by acquiring consumable characteristics. The performance of this type of operation, is identified by Freud, as the interaction of several processes, which make up the system that he terms simply the dream-work (*Traumarbeit*) – the components in question are displacement, condensation and distortion.

Both dreams and tones are nomadic figures for they continually lead away from the spot where one thinks matters should be settled. This is really all that the famous Freudian thesis of 'dreams as wish fulfillments' intimates (SE 4: 121). Being such vehicles of transport, they need their own, uniquely calibrated and engineered propulsion system, which is acquired through overwrought plastic abilities, combining, metamorphosing and juxtaposing, experiences, thoughts and desires, into new and unseemly complexes. And we are in the position to say something quite similar about the tone, and its harmony, especially since Schoenberg espouses this kind of view, unequivocally, as, for instance, when he pronounces that it is in the nature of every chord, to lead away, to go astray from the centre of the fundamental tone (the key) set up as the overseer of 'correct' but otherwise, arbitrary harmonic progression:

> …after all, if one thinks about tonality [one can see that] everything, with the exception of the first degree, [the tonic], is so to speak passing, or at least going – everything is in motion (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 352).

Schoenberg makes it a point of emphasis that, one does not need elaborately special means to escape the musical key (like for instance, technically speaking the seventh or the ninth chord) since, every complex of sounds that follows the initial statement of tonality, is already an underhanded saboteur, because it already possesses the kernels of another centre, another complex.

The conclusion then inescapably becomes clear: "…these chords [that make up our present musical language] also carry within themselves that which will eventually overthrow the system" (ibid., p. 314). In other words, the system of harmony, imposes restrictions and stymies the free flow of sound, just like (in Freud's scheme) the super-ego or culture represses the unblocked fluctuations of the libido. Of course, certain amount of repression and blockage are necessary, otherwise no form could take shape, especially the temporal one, since phenomena need stability in order to acquire a time-line (the quantitative dimension of duration), in the first place. But the problem, in Freud's and Schoenberg's estimation, becomes the overburdening of such energetic translations, where the unpredictable, nascent moment, is stripped of its expectation, not so much of fulfillment, but more fundamentally of its possibility. At stake is nothing less than the identity of the self (whether as the ego or the tone) propelled by an untamed elementariness of drives and instincts, which, when allowed into the process of psychological accounting (and to Schoenberg, the book he is writing, i.e. *The Theory of Harmony* is something that nears the psychology of the tone, as we will see) alights reality with structures that float on the surface, like buoys on water; or, in other words, structures which otherwise would remain submerged, in the unconscious. Tonality, then, just like Freud's ego-psychology, is fundamentally at odds with itself, caught up in a series of self-contradictions, whose fabric, even though it is 'tailor-made', does not quite fit:

> Every chord, then, that is set beside the principal tone has at least as much tendency to lead away from it as to return to it. And if life, if a work of art is to emerge, then we must engage in this movement-generating conflict. The tonality must be placed in danger of losing its sovereignty; the appetites for independence and the tendencies toward mutiny must be given opportunity to activate themselves; one must grant them the victories, not begrudging them an occasional expansion of territory (ibid., p. 151).

This kind of psychological language is not simply an occasional metaphor, but a staple configuration of language in *The Theory of Harmony*, which uses explicit and like-minded vocabulary of drives, the unconscious, repression and psychology, to solidify its exposition of the musical complex.

Dreams, according to their 'technical specifications', are akin to the process of decomposition found in the chemical reaction of composting, for they combine experiences, especially the leftovers and the rest parts, into the freshness of planting soil, or new surfaces of representation. It is for this reason, that what is of most essential value to dreams, seems to be of no value at all to reality. The preference for the non-essential materials (insignificant encounters, inconsequential experiences, illogical words, images and sounds) is the only way available to escape the censorship of the super-ego, which always guards zealously the entrance to consciousness, like the Sphinx guarding the gates of Thebes.

We can perhaps now understand more clearly Schoenberg's analogy, as regards the dissonance and the aforementioned mythological figure. Dissonance, in the functionality of the tonal system, acts as the conscience, moreover the guilty conscience, which shrieks with terror before a transgression (as pleasurable in itself as it may be) is committed. What we find in the nature of the tone, therefore, is the same transposition that takes place in dreams (and we should remember that to Freud, dream interpretation is the model for the psychic apparatus of the mind in general). That is, the tension and its meaning are spanned between the latent and the manifest content of the phenomenon. Simply put, dreams' manifest content is the undercover agent, the messenger and envoy, who carries the turbulent and heretical information of the latent message that originates in the unconscious. This dynamic is repeated in music, through what Schoenberg refers to, as vagrant chords:

> Little is actually said whenever one shows where the chord comes from. Because it can come from everywhere. What is essential for us is its function, and that is revealed when we know the possibilities the chord affords. Why single out these vagrant chords and insist that they be traced back at all cost to a key…? Later, the pupil will best take all these vagrant chords for what they really are, without tracing them back to a key or a degree: homeless phenomena, unbelievably adaptable and unbelievably lacking in independence; spies, who ferret out weaknesses and use them to cause confusion; turncoats, to whom abandonment of their individuality is an end in itself; agitators in every respect, but above all: most amusing fellows (ibid., p. 258).

Vagrant phenomena, vagabonds, hobos who use other means of transport, in order to reach a place of functional origin; capillaries that circulate through the entire space, in a sort of auto-analytic guise, just like the human organism experiences basic, non-expungable auto-eroticism. Eventually, Schoenberg will attempt to dispense with the idea of vagrant or non-harmonic tones entirely, for such descriptions can only make sense and are implied by the strictures of the tonal system, a system whose constraints one is now able to escape: "*There are no non-harmonic tones, for harmony means tones sounding together (Zusammenklang)*" (ibid., p. 318). But it is important to notice, that the escape in question, so popularized and taken as the 'neon-sign' of the entire musical scene of the time, is not an illogical, propagandistic and ideological cause, purely for its own sake. On the contrary, the removal of tonal censorship, the act of stepping outside its boundaries, should be always motivated artistically. This means, that there must be a nucleus of a creative idea that needs and calls for the out of bounds orbit, just as it had called and still can do so (inspired by a genuine creative expression) for tonality, as the only position through which that nucleonic, creative kernel can actualize itself, for: "…he [the artist] is merely the instrument of a will hidden from him, of instinct of his unconscious… He feels only the instinctual compulsion, which he must obey" (ibid., p. 416). To dispense with the drive,[174] to eliminate it from the perceptive depth, diminishing its intensity through repression, is a misguided exercise, for "…to make ourselves independent of instinct is as difficult as it is dangerous" (ibid., p. 416).[175] The Freudian moment in these concluding pages of Schoenberg's *magnum opus*, is elevated to the point, that even the translator of the work, calls for a speculation of a possible connection, in a footnote.[176] And everything points towards the fact that Schoenberg, in spite of his 'official ignorance', was much more familiar, and much more intimate with Freudian theories, than most commentators cared to admit or even investigate.

But this realization is (in a sense) a misnomer, for it misses the convergence of Schoenberg's music with psychoanalysis, which lies in a much subtler connection. For we may ask, why is it that Schoenberg feels the necessity to use psychological/psychoanalytic language at this, still relatively early stage of his development? And the most likely inference, is that he lacks a mode of expression to stabilize and expose the logic, that permeates practically all levels of the fin de siècle reality – the logic of space which becomes analytical, breaking things apart, making them disappear, but always partially, what I have already attempted to present under the complex of a ruin, or the more abstract concept of aesthetics of disappearance. Schoenberg uses, then, what had already become known enough to speak to and resonate with intellectual/artistic audiences, as well as what had captured some of the spirit that, seemingly, is in constantly renewed emergency mode, under the threat of assault and readiness for instantaneous flight:

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[174] Schoenberg uses here the same word employed by Freud, *der Trieb*, which is usually rendered into English as instinct, although a more accurate translation would be the drive.

[175] Schoenberg also says that man is a being splint between two forces, an economy which matches the one of Freud: "Two impulses struggle with each other within man: the demand for repetition of pleasant stimuli, and the opposing desire for variety, for change, for a new stimulus. These two impulses often unite in one relatively common impulse characteristic of beasts of prey: the impulse to take possession" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 48).

[176] "The impact of Sigmund Freud's work (and that of Jung and Adler) on his Viennese contemporary, Schoenberg, and on other artists of the period, invites investigation and speculation" (ibid., translator's note, p. 416).

> For, alongside [the knowledge of] what is right and what is wrong, alongside the inherited experiences and observations of our ancestors, alongside that which we owe to their and our past, there is in the instinct perhaps a faculty that is only now being developed: a knowledge of the future; perhaps also other faculties, which man will one day consciously posses, but which at present he can at most only sense and yearn for but cannot translate into action. The artist's creative activity is instinctive. Consciousness has little influence on it. He feels as if what he does were dictated to him. As if he did it only according to the will of some power or other within him, whose laws he does not know. He is merely the instrument of a will hidden from him, of instinct, of his unconscious… In his instinct, in his unconscious lies a wealth of old knowledge, which he will resurrect whether he wants to or not (ibid., p. 416).

Now, we know, that for Freud, the unconscious (a concept, which, it bears reminding, has had a long tradition in the German philosophical setting, and belongs intimately to it) is a crutch, to describe for what he (as yet) has no image; a sign which Freud nonetheless reconfigures to fit into the scheme of the mind that is being proposed, removing it (as he points out) from under the philosophical umbrella:

> It is not without intention that I speak of 'our' unconscious. For what I thus describe is not the same as the unconscious of the philosophers or even the unconscious of Lipps. By them the term is used merely to indicate a contrast with the conscious (SE 5: 614).

We know further, that this always annoying enclosure, for it tells us continually that there is something we need to know, and do not yet know, while giving nothing in return but a sequence of roundabout routs, which imitate the hidden 'truth', is also a sort of archive in which the memories of past generations are stored in a catalogue of symbolic expressions (the image of Borges' infinite library can be of use here)[177] which can then be plugged in, and re-lived in the present, although not indiscriminately, and not without guilt, hence the system of repression that situates itself at the nodal point of entrance into the consciousness of pure, exuberant release. This type of energetic mapping, its *cartography*, manipulates psychological dimensions of time; its past as history/tradition, its present as the play of disjunctions in the form of symptoms, and the future as unfulfilled wish. This is the grid onto whose coordinates Schoenberg is incessantly and unavoidably thrown.

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Just as Freud sets out to prove that one does not simply dream, but rather *lives* on a different plane through dreaming (the plane of interpretation and analysis), so too by Schoenberg's adage "[o]ne does not harmonize, one *invents* with harmony" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 286, my emphasis). And what one invents, is nothing less than a new nature, new individuality: "...a new sound is a symbol, discovered involuntarily, a symbol proclaiming the new man who asserts his individuality" (ibid., p. 400). This is the case not only because "[n]ot once had the nature of the chord been described with adequate precision" (ibid., p. 313), but because chords themselves are such organic structures, which live: "...the tone lives and seeks to propagate itself" (ibid., p. 313). Not surprisingly, then, given our previous argument, we are finding in Schoenberg the organics of sound that can be manipulated like a physical body, and thus even dissected:

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[177] "*The library is unlimited but periodic*. If an eternal traveler should journey in any direction, he would find after untold centuries that the same volumes are repeated in the same disorder – which, repeated, becomes order: the Order." (Jorge Luis Borges, "The Library of Babel", in *Collected Fictions*, p. 118). Strangely, the manner of repeated disorder that becomes the Order, maps out Schoenberg's technique.

"This work [of harmonization] is like the exercises in dissection performed by young doctors on cadavers: if they cut too deeply, nobody's hurt" (ibid., p. 287). And even though, Schoenberg here refers to the exercises to be performed by the student of harmony, on dead musical fragments, which devoid of a creative idea are far from being fully fledged compositions (hence the cadavers), the general notion of an organism also applies to the much more sophisticated and inspired work of the composer, for: "our relation to this prototype [the tone] is that of the analyst, of the seeker; in imitating it we discover more or fewer of its truths" (ibid., p. 319). The role of the analyst, like the one emphasized so vociferously by psychoanalysis, is not simply to shatter and fragment (the strictest meaning of analysis, which comes from the Greek root, meaning 'to break apart') but to provide a connective tissue, onto which impulses can be *transferred* and recombined. This is the only possibility, the only artistic choice "...for it is impossible that in a well-constructed organism, such as a work of art, anything will happen that exerts absolutely no influence anywhere else in the organism" (ibid., p. 311).

Towards the end of the book, in the section entitled 'The Chromatic Scale as a Basis for Tonality', Schoenberg responds directly to a third party commentary on the subject matter of his exposition: "I am writing this chapter after completing the book, because of some objections and criticism raised by Dr. Robert Neumann..." (ibid., p. 384). The most interesting and, from our standpoint, crucial formulation, since it also proves to be just as important to Schoenberg's line of investigation, is the underlying proviso behind the entire project:

> Most essential is the following psychological assumption: The development of the harmonic resources is explained primarily through the conscious or unconscious imitation of a prototype; every imitation so produced can then itself become a prototype that can in turn be imitated (ibid., p. 385).

Such an attempt to explain problems psychologically (ibid., p. 328), creates an interval-like positioning towards a reality that in itself is based on the system of distances and proximity (and I will say quite a bit more about that later) because it deals with removals and closeness which are either released (their mild form is what Schoenberg calls extended, fluctuating or suspended tonality; the most extreme form takes on the identity of the 12-tone method of composition) or maintained in the form of tonality, which, from Schoenberg's perspective, generally over-regulates them. In any case, tonality in itself is not the crux of the matter. What is objectionable is the system of tonality used indiscriminately, simply because one follows the rules, which makes music into a form of ethics, instead of what it should be, i.e. aesthetics, that is aesthetics as an artistic effect (but certainly not an aesthetics as the legislative organ, or theory, for a series of instituted, rigid rules turns aesthetics into the lowest form of ethics – morality in the form of artistic conscience).

Now, there is no doubt that ethics and aesthetics are intimately connected – we have already seen how much, through the theory of empathy, proposed by Theodor Lipps at around the same time. It would not be too much of a stretch to use the concept of *Einfühlung* to describe the entire exercise of and in harmony proposed by Schoenberg, since in fact, the problem and the desired result revolve around the feeling of oneness that a composer is to effectuate between himself, his ego, and the material he is working with, i.e. sound; an agreement between vibration-frequencies provided by the nature of the tone. Done properly, such feeling of mutual resonance, will find in tonality, what the latter wants to, in a reflex-like manner, smudge. This is why:

> …it is more to the point to regard tonality as the large region in whose outlying districts less dependent forces resist domination by the central power (ibid., p. 369).

That is perhaps why, Schoenberg is able to proclaim (or give) what most would think impossible of him:

> It depends, namely, on the composer, whether he creates tonality or not. For, that one *can* create it, I consider possible. Only, whether one *must* still work for it, indeed, whether one *ought* to work for it any more at all, I doubt (ibid., p. 394).

This text, presented in a footnote, is modified and mitigated still further, two pages later:

> My arguments were meant to refute the belief in the necessity of tonality, but not the belief in the power of a work of art whose author believes in tonality. What a composer believes in theoretically he may indeed express in the external aspects of his work. With luck, only in the external. But internally, where the instincts take over, all theory will with luck fail, and there he will express something better than his theory and mine (ibid., p. 396).

Here, Schoenberg quite clearly and once again falls under the spell of certain *depth-psychology*, which, à la Freud, remains and exists by the fact that it is subject to the almost mysterious forces of drives and instincts, of the unconscious. All these seem to provide an exit from reality and its technique (whether it is the psychic or musical reality) into a different dimension which lays bare the overarching symbolism that serves as the distorting ornament, a façade that masks and reduces phenomena to the instance of being mere collectables, as opposed to being charged bodies. This is the explanation for Schoenberg's sentence fragment above, which judges and divides the external from the internal, even though, ideally such a division would stop being the evaluative statement, and the standard of distinction for all phenomena, but especially the ones in the nature of music.

Tonality, taken in this light, is a mere ornamental decision, which has no expressive power anymore, for it does not correspond to the logic that prevails, the logic of plasticity; and the latter is the touch-stone, the threshold of phenomena, even if only because of the new historical timeframe, which, given its unsettled nature, is always, to a certain extent, elastic. It is this kind of inherent elasticity of time and the phenomena suspended in it, that the fin de siècle imposes as the standard for the general notion of things, in the all-embracing range of occurrences, as we have seen.

There are at least a couple of occasions, when Schoenberg mentions his good friend, Adolf Loos, exactly in the context of the latter's criticism, or rather, an all out attack, on the artistic encampments of the time, which still exalt the surface, and its decoration, as the region where things are to happen, i.e., transpire. Such unbalanced approach, confuses the values of events and phenomena, assigning them to, and placing these assignments in the wrong spots, thus making 'polluted' deposits, into the laundered/bleached reality:

> One must not be ashamed of satisfying the practical requirements of the material, and may confess it openly, without adorning it, without glorifying it. But then one will not always do the opposite of what is right. Those who on the one hand simplify (by suppressing sense and preserving only its shell, the formula) complicate on the other hand (by 'artistically' embellishing the shell). Thus they fail in everything that matters: because instead of sense they always give the form, the formula. Their simplicity and their complexity are incorrectly related to the content [that is, their simplicity or complexity is external, *a priori*, not inherent]. They are simple when one must be complex; they are intricate when one may be straightforward. I have known this for a long time in my own rather narrow field, but in another I had to learn it from a rough slap in the face, which I deserved. That slap made clear to me how much our taste in almost all fields is corrupted by the 'decorators' (*Ornamentierer*) (as Adolf Loos calls them) disguised as simplifiers (ibid., p. 270).

The slap in the face Schoenberg refers to, concerns a simple, practical matter, that is, a sketch of a design for a music stand, which a certain Czech carpenter, refused to make ('No good, carpenter will make that for you', is what he purportedly had said, as reported by Schoenberg) on account of the lack of logical use of material. Of course, as always, what is being illustrated by this incident, and Schoenberg's later evaluation of it, slices right into the subject matter of his craft, and our investigation of its motivating factors, i.e., the kind of space that it produces for itself, and seems to share with, not only psychoanalysis, but the entire environment of the turn.

Should we be surprised then, that Schoenberg says something quite similar to Freud, about the tone? That he assigns it to the magnitude that lies beyond the strictly musical? In his frequent references to the psychological aspects of the tone, Schoenberg places music outside the subject matter, i.e., outside its own self as sound, because we are continually facing a psychology over which one does not exercise direct control, since the tone does not respond to the visual representation of the system (all these notes), but to a hidden existential current that touches all reality:

> Instead of seeing that both [the chord and the melody] serve only one purpose, that is, penetration into what is given in nature, we take now the one, now the other to be the essence of music; whereas, in reality, this essence is not even the third [possibility] but rather some fourth [possibility] that cannot be more closely examined here (ibid., p. 315).

This important passage is supplemented by the translator's footnote, which specifies and recounts the musical possibilities, the driving force (or as Schoenberg says *der Motor*) behind the extenuation of sound: "That is, the essence of music is not (1) the chord, nor (2) counterpoint, nor (3) chords in conjunction with counterpoint, but (4) something different" (ibid., p. 315). We may speculate as to what this "something different" is, somewhat hopelessly, since not even Schoenberg can direct us towards the appropriate and accurate description. But one thing is certain: this other dimension is approximated in a more intense way, via the chromatic scale as the basis of sonority and its perpetual re-composition. And given that all music is always already a procedure of transvaluation because sound lives most naturally under the identity of dissipation; given that it takes the tone but a moment to express the interplay of stability and crisis, which reworks spaces into aural, sutured surfaces, there must also be a breach somewhere, positioned uniquely as the centre, the focus point, which pins surfaces together, by their sides. A centre whose coordinates are off-centre (mathematically speaking) – a position that allows for the innocuousness of coherence, to take hold:

> If a rapture [of tonality] does nevertheless occur, the consequence is not necessarily disintegration and formlessness. For the chromatic scale is a form, too (ibid., p. 247).

The chromatic scale (the scale that involves all 12 tones) serves as the conceptual unit, from which complexes are being derived; complexes that are closer to the natural impulsivity of creation, than tonality. All this, reminds us of Freud's fight, his intellectual haggling and bartering, all in an effort to establish dreams, as highly charged realities, in their own right; as events that have something to say, and could actually prove to be crucial (as support systems) to the psychological normality of clearly parceled out phenomena. This is why Freud also calls out, very much into the void at first, for the recuperation of dreaming, from its traditional black mark of meaninglessness, intriguingly enough for us, by using a musical metaphor:

> Dreaming has often been compared with 'the ten fingers of a man who knows nothing of music wandering over the keys of a piano … and this simile shows as well as anything the sort of opinion that is usually held of dreaming by representatives of the exact sciences. In this view a dream is something wholly and completely incapable of interpretation; for how could the ten fingers of an unmusical player produce a piece of music? (SE 4, p. 78).

A few pages down, we find this rectification of such a mistaken belief, which also proceeds via a musical analogy:

> We find ourselves in the full daylight of a sudden discovery. Dreams are not to be linked to the unregulated sounds that rise from a musical instrument struck by the bow of some external force instead of by a player's hand; they are not meaningless, they are not absurd; they do not imply that one portion of our store of ideas is asleep while another portion is beginning to wake. On the contrary, they are psychical phenomena of complete validity – fulfillments of wishes; they can be inserted into the chain of intelligible waking mental acts; they are constructed by a highly complicated activity of the mind (SE 4: 122).

This recuperation takes the form of reassigning the weight and the responsibility for reality, not only to other forces, but especially to phenomena that have previously been excluded from the calculation altogether, precisely the kind of procedure that Schoenberg performs on the tone. And just as he is able to say, that ultimately there are no non-harmonic tones, so too Freud is telling us that there are really no dreams, but only configurations that place things in a 'dishevelled' reality that nonetheless speaks volumes.

But how does one hear such voluminous streams of information, when these operate on a frequency that might not be immediately accessible? The answer is now simple and quite predictable: by calibrating and fine tuning a special organ of perception. It is the ego as consciousness, in the entire psychic scheme of psychoanalysis, that becomes such an organ: "...we regard consciousness as a sense organ which perceives data that arise elsewhere (SE 4: 144). Consciousness is the receptor that stands in-between the latent and the manifest organization of the entire store of messages, putting these, figuratively speaking on a long production-line, which forces them to pass through a tedious and predetermined process, where (depending on their charge) they are treated through variable sequencing, fluctuating amortization and constantly retuned reception. In this way, the subject develops an invented organ of distance perception, a sort of unconscious ear, that serializes events, making chains of investigative notions, that must be always recreated anew although, given that a certain indestructible consistency is always present in them, they are also configurations which can always be applied piece meal, as ready made solutions. This is how dreams acquire the constancy of agents that condense, displace and distort.

It is, then, consciousness that possesses the depth-sounding, sonar like equipment which receives the phonetic-signatures of the sunk and buried memory trances; an unconscious ear, as we have just proposed – a formulation that, in fact, is used by Schoenberg:

> What has been attained is the almost exhaustive combination of all possibilities of this system by the *unconscious ear* of the creative musician, by his intuition. Still absolutely missing is the correct identification of the relation between what has been attained and what is still to strive for. We must yet strive for everything that is left over… (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 319).

It is only the ear that can take the leadership role in the intuitive imagination which composes in options and possibilities, first and foremost, before it applies itself to, or occupies an object that rouses automatically towards action, which in itself is an expression of intuitive understanding: "My ear has said: yes, and the ear is, after all, a musician's whole understanding" (ibid., p. 410).

This understanding is concerned not with a store or a warehouse of knowledge, but rather with lines of association which spin around punctures in the web of information, making the contents (at least partially) leak out and seep through. As such, both Schoenberg and Freud, are dealing with a tear in the fabric of the psychic and the musical reality. Freud's tear assumes the shape of the famous component, the *navel* of a dream: "There is at least one spot in every dream at which it is unplumbable – a navel, as it were, that is its point of contact with the unknown (SE 4: 111). This point of attachment, like a nerve ending, registers tremors, which disturb the ongoing investigation, but also open up new paths of association:

> There is often a passage in even the most thoroughly interpreted dream which has to be left obscure; this is because we become aware during the work of interpretation that at that point there is a tangle of dream-thoughts which cannot be unravelled and which moreover adds nothing to our knowledge of the content of the dream. This is the dream's

> navel, the spot where it reaches down into the unknown. The dream-thoughts to which we are led by interpretation cannot, from the nature of things, have any definite endings; they are bound to branch out in every direction into the intricate network of our word of thought. It is at some point where this meshwork is particularly close that the dream-wish grows up, like a mushroom out of its mycelium (SE 5: 525).

Phenomena of this sort present us with enough 'signification plaster' to temporarily patch the tear. Yet they are always breached and redirected anew, into a position of discomfort, since the tension of the rapture, its span and its diameter, are not geometrical constants. But if not a geometry, then what is it that we are actually dealing with? Perhaps a dynamic topography which makes structures of empty spaces (an emptiness that in any case is only illusory, since our language has no signifying power to express it) as much as from solidified complexes, i.e. complexes that are defined in advance.

The navel can also be considered as the underside of the weak spot of a dream, a never healed wound of sorts, given that it is the channel of communication with 'truth' as the motivating factor behind any psychic event. Such a weak spot is not inconsequential, nor is it a hindrance, but precisely the opposite; it is something that usually emerges during psychoanalytical interpretation, as both an indicator of where the essential information is to be found, as well as the facilitator of the analytical process itself:

> In analysing the dreams of my patients I sometimes put this assertion to the following test, which has never failed me. If the first account given me by a patient of a dream is too hard to follow I ask him to repeat it. In doing so he rarely uses the same words. But the parts of the dream which he describes in different terms are by that fact revealed to me as the weak spot in the dream's disguise… That is the point at which the interpretation of the dream can be started… (SE 5: 515).

This is where interpretation can also end, as we have seen, when one reaches the navel of such a weak spot, either because there is not enough signifying material at hand, or because the navel is approached too recklessly or too quickly.

I will not get into the issue of where one begins or stops, where one terminates and ends, or closes without termination. Freud considers the issue in *Analysis, Terminable and Interminable*, without an ultimate pronouncement, because what motivates and decides is, in the end, a moment of hesitation as intuition, which is always part and parcel of the technique of analysis, in all its guises.[178] But let us instead concentrate on the building blocks of dreams and sounds – resonant images made up of words and tones, which, as we are learning, move on parallel tracks. It is in the peculiar movement and animation of these, where the issue of closing, in any case, is decided by its own momentum, after the goal, which was from the start immersed in the impulsive energy of the unconscious, has been reached: "Thus, we may well ask: Why, in what manner, and when does a piece of music close? The answer can only be a general one: As soon as the goal is reached" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 126). And in fact, this goal is reached, at least partially, when consciousness *becomes* the organ of perception, as opposed to a mute and blind recording surface; when it is able to perceive what usually is muffled. In this, consciousness has no other alternative, but to use a few choice words/tones, in the structural scaffolding, which redevelops the ear (technically speaking) making the ego into an *echo* of all the parts that interminably vibrate together.

Words used by the patient in the process of dream description are phenomena of lower intensity, simply because they a prone to instability, i.e., changing significations. This weakness is something advantageous, in that it is used by dreams to combine and build up complexes of intensity, which condense the message coming in from the unconscious, distorting it at the same time, since the message must find a way of acceptable representation: "The greatest intensity is shown by those elements of a dream on whose formation the greatest amount of condensation has been expended" (SE 4: 330). Condensation, or the intensification of impulses coming in through the navel as the sluice (the weak spot as a sort of valve) distorts as it translates the information frequencies into new lines of 'data', since these must look respectable (and by that dint find representation) in the 'eyes' of the psychic censorship. That is why, condensation, displacement and distortion are but three moments of the one process of dream-work (*Traumarbeit*), and why words, in their standard identity as speech phenomena, are much less important than their natural, but usually deceptively hidden pliability (since one tends to dismiss their failure, as an innocent mistake or even a non-event). The upshot of this realization is not merely that "[w]ords, since they are the nodal points of numerous ideas, may be regarded as predestined to ambiguity" (SE 5: 340) but, more significant is that "…for the purpose of representation in dreams the spelling of words [or their surface signification] is far less important than their sound" (SE 5: 406).

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[178] The thrill of such a hesitation does not escape Schoenberg either: "Stopping is simple; it means not continuing. Closing, though, is different. To close, one must use special means" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 126).

All this boils down to a reinvention of approach towards things, for just as words lose their weight as mere speech-phenomena, and become coagulations of sound, the logic that underlies even the vocal aspect, comes to the fore in that "…the peculiar plasticity of the psychical material [in dreams] must never be forgotten" (SE 5: 352). It is perhaps only now that we can understand Freud's statement about music, or rather why it is that he cannot take much pleasure in it, as he says in *The Moses of Michelangelo*:

> Works of art do exercise a powerful effect on me, especially those of literature and sculpture, less often painting. This has occasioned me, when I have been contemplating such things, to spend a long time before them trying to apprehend them in my own way, i.e., to explain to myself what their effect is due to. Wherever I cannot do this, as for instance with music, I am almost incapable of obtaining any pleasure (SE 13: 211).

This remark, made almost offhandedly at the beginning of an essay that is to consider Michelangelo's sculpture of Moses; a paper curiously enough, which appears anonymously in 1914,[179] and remains so for ten years, when the disguise is finally lifted in 1924, leaves much for speculation. The key concept seems to be contemplation; an obdurate malignancy of duration, which gives pleasure, where sound cannot, since things happens too quickly and all at once in it. Perhaps, it is only a matter of a personal hobby, of the ability to take pleasure and time off from work, given that music (how closely it is indeed related to the overall nature of the human psyche) would require a special means of attention, precisely the type of attention that lies at the heart of the psychoanalytic technique, which does not distinguish and discriminate among specific features and impulses by being 'evenly suspended'. And, in fact, as one reads the text of *Moses*, Freud indulges in a minute interpretation of detail in the sculpture (the position of the hands, the finger in the beard, the way the stone tablets are wedged under the arm, etc.), inordinately so – an analysis which goes against the grain of the psychoanalytic technique (a condition which immediately and for many years to come disowns the text from authorship). In any case, given that Freud always fights for sturdy/propped up reality, music, when compared to the bonded quality of a stone sculpture, represents too much of the reality under construction, which goes on behind the scenes, and which ultimately must be calmed down enough in its churnings, for representations to become straightforward enough to be functional. In this sense, and in line with our previous discussion, music is too closely attached to the neutral plastic element, which is the drive-shaft of the psyche, making it a matter of professional, technical and scientific consideration (even though all this always remains implicit in Freud) and not pure aesthetic enjoyment. Such communicative inaccessibility of music, is expressed by Schoenberg in 1912: "…the most wonderful thing about music is that one can say everything in it, so that he who knows understands everything; and yet one hasn't given away one's secrets – the things one doesn't admit even to oneself".[180] Such circumstances, well known to most musicians, are unacceptable to Freud, who needs and searches for confidential admission, in whatever shape.

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[179] The paper firsts appears in the pages of the *Imago* (3 (1), 15–36) and is accompanied by a footnote, drafted by Freud himself: "Although this paper does not, strictly speaking, conform to the conditions under which contributions are accepted for publications in this Journal, the editors have decided to print it, since the author, who is personally known to them, moves in psycho-analytic circles, and since his mode of thought has in point of fact a certain resemblance to the methodology of psycho-analysis" (SE 13: 211, note).

But, if nothing can be gained through music in its overall aesthetic effect, there is definitely something to be won through the analysis of sound. This aspect of the structure of reality, is very much present in Schoenberg, who reaches down into and eventually beyond the musical (the standard signification of the tone, as the variously named chord) to arrive at the forming element itself, the element that animates sound into perpetually forged expression, which makes the tone into nothing less than a new way of thinking, just like "[a]t bottom, dreams are nothing other than a particular form of thinking" (SE 5: 506). To speak in those terms is to acknowledge, once again in agreement with Freud that dream-work "…does not think, calculate or judge in any way at all; it restricts itself to giving things a new form" (SE 5: 507). Schoenberg echoes this kind of sentiment when, throughout the *Theory of Harmony*, he makes it a point of emphasis, that the standard accusation thrown in the face of his musical thinking, the reproach that his creative activity is only a mechanical procedure that calculates, weighs and heartlessly engineers sound, is not only unfair, but unfounded: "Invention, but not calculation! One may compose by taking thought, but one must not deliberately observe how one is thinking.

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[180] In John C. Crawford and Dorothy L. Crawford, *Expressionism in Twentieth-Century Music*, p. 6.

One can create freely within a tonality (*Tonart*) only if there is the feeling for this tonality in the unconscious" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 395). There is no doubt that Schoenberg's sound, just like Freud's dreams, promulgates a new way of thinking, but thinking here does not correspond to the standard way of thought, its rationality, its ends-means instrumentality of proof as ultimate pronouncement. The 'calculus' that comes through, if we can refer to the phenomenon in those terms at all, is not a differential equation, but one which rests on unity, singularity and infinity. Taking this into account, we realize that the integrity of the 'number' or what comes through as the musical or psychic phenomenon (and we have an increasingly hard time of distinguishing between the two) is dispersed, i.e. it is not found in its ingrained core as meaning, but in the relations that are extended to everything around, and this indicates that the meaning we are continually in search of, is spread around the agitated context, even if all this seems somewhat chaotic.

If there is a law, or a rule that is applied consistently and invariably by Schoenberg, it is precisely the one above, which takes the immediacy of a tone's presence, and what surrounds it like an organism in its own metabolism, as its identity, and not some distant relationship to an abstract centre, from which, as the musical logic progresses, one becomes more and more removed anyway, the centre of the tonic. This is also a distinguishing feature of dreams and their interpretation:

> We have already become acquainted with the interpretative rule according to which every element in a dream can, for purposes of interpretation, stand for its opposite just as easily as for itself. We can never tell beforehand whether it stands for the one or the other; *only the context can decide…* This turning of a thing into its opposite is made possible by the intimate associative chain which links the idea of a thing with its opposite in our thoughts (SE 5: 471, my emphasis).

Such intimate chains of association, which always deal with and live through inversions, twists and turns, thus producing an overabundance of variety and diversity which allows them to enter consciousness, are constructs employed by Schoenberg in his 12-tone technique. The importance of the context, the fact that it is both the impetus for complexes of tones, just as these are inadvertently the effect of its work, a sort of *Tonarbeit* (an extension of the logic of *Traumarbeit*) is already evident in the official description of the method, which as we know is suspicious of 'atonlity' (given that tones are present in it, even much more forcefully that in the realm of tonality) or even of the 12-tone composition (since tonality, through chromaticism also has the ability to use all of twelve) and later serialism. Schoenberg's much more cumbersome but accurate designation is: "*Method of Composing with Twelve Tones Which are Related only with One Another*" (*Style and Idea*, p. 218); a definition which he insists on, throughout. This instance is motivated by nothing less than the overall meaning of the project and the positioning of tones as intense phenomena that operationalize their orbits of influence through condensation, displacement and distortion, in the form of sound (this distinction between tones and sound, parallels Freud's division between dream-thoughts and dreams as pure phenomena in their 'empirical' contents, as the finished product of *Traumarbeit*).

Dream-thoughts/tones become the spatial phenomena of dreams/sound, via the procedure of sequencing, since this is the only possibility for creating associations, which in turn lead to new symbolism, new individuality, inscribed in sound or dream: "The sequence is the kind of repetition well suited for creating coherence" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 282). This is to say the least, because this kind of coherence that constantly diversifies, which must be moved away from the simple convergence (as the tonal pre-meditation of chord progressions or dreams as mere absurd illusions) also liberates a new logic of *how* things should be put together; a logic that also emanates in Schoenberg from the event of a rapture.

We should thus not remain too startled, if we hear Schoenberg exposing and pronouncing almost exactly the same logic that is enclosed in the bowels (so to speak) of the dream-work, when he applies it to his assessment of tonality and says:

> I have shown that the system of tertian harmony has a rapture and that chords that do not fit in the system have been grouped together under the heading 'non-harmonic tones'. I have exposed this classification as the poorly disguised attempt to plug up the hole in the system with an imposing heap of unexamined scarp material, a heap so big that neither the hole nor the system itself is big enough to accommodate it (ibid., p. 399).

In its reflexive motion of arbitrary exclusion, tonality acquired the characteristics of a meticulously swept foyer, and yet, if one were to open any one of the doors leading from it, one would find that all the discarded materials, all the dust and sooth, have been simply removed and stored there, almost all the way up to the ceiling. The most significant reason for such a poorly masked messiness is found in the dishonest motivating force that works itself through the tonal system – vision. Tonality creates a sham of a space, a simple container whose volume is quickly overfilled, because it makes censorial decision based on the eye, and its always limited capacity for simultaneous reception of events, both in their scope/breadth and speed:

> I maintain, namely, that the system of triads was extended to chords of four and five tones only because and wherever the image of superimposed thirds allowed extension, addition of thirds on top of thirds. Actually, then, [this extension grew] out of the graphic representation of the sounds, out of the *visual* impression: point, space, point, space, point, space… Only the sounds that could be traced back to this image [notation] were incorporated into the system (ibid., p. 317)

Tonality, according to Schoenberg, is full of such artificial, visual solutions, which also lead towards arbitrary exclusions on the basis of visual representation, as happens for instance in the case of the ninth chord:

> The ninth chord is the stepchild of the system. Although it is at least as legitimate a product of the system as the seventh chord, it nonetheless comes repeatedly under question. Why it is questioned is obscure. The system begins to be artificial as soon as it fashions the minor triad after the major triad... As far as I know the most important objection to the ninth chords is that their inversions are not supposed to be practicable. I suspect also this silly hindrance, that the ninth chord is not easy to represent in four-part writing; for the sake of the ninth chord we should need five or six voices (ibid., p. 345)

As is well known, this was precisely the objection to Schoenberg's first major composition, and since then, a masterpiece of 'classical' repertoire, the sextet *Verklärte Nacht* ('Transfigured Night'), which contains an inversion of the ninth chord:

> Only now do I understand the objection, at the time beyond my comprehension, of that concert society which refused to perform my Sextet on account of this chord (its refusal was actually so explained). Naturally: inversions of ninth chords just don't exist; hence, no performance, either, for how can one perform something that does not exist (ibid., p. 346).

The issue, as we are finding out, is the control of space, and in fact, its corruption. If tonality, in a self-congratulatory gesture, thinks it provides a safe haven to sound, then it is actually effectuating the opposite, i.e., smothering it, by elevating the eye over the ear.[181] Through such a performance, tonality erects artificial geometries, which even though at first, neatly organize and polish some of the musical reality's aspects (like the visual perspective does, in its formula of distance that is incrementally controlled in painting), in the long run, any space that frames in such, seemingly, rational a manner, destabilizes the entire environment of which it is the expression, precisely because it cannot expresses much beyond the pure application of its technique. But the goal, as we might suspect by now, is precisely the opposite: to enliven space, fertilize it by organic-like configurations, whose living tissue, can accept transplants, and be used in a sort of organ-donation procedure, that means to support other realities, which need its vitality. It is the image of such an analytical-organic space that predominates Schoenberg's explanation of his 12-tone technique:

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[181] Schoenberg, as we know, works feverishly against such a state of affairs. When, in 1908, he shows the score of his *Five Orchestral Pieces op. 16* to Mahler, the later openly states "...that he could not read it, for he was unable to translate the optical impression of the pieces into the acoustical [!]" (Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, p. 106).

> THE TWO-OR-MORE-DIMENSIONAL SPACE IN WHICH MUSICAL IDEAS ARE PRESENTED IS A UNIT. Though the elements of these ideas appear separate and independent to the eye and the ear, they reveal their true meaning only through their co-operation, even as no single word alone can express a thought without relation to other words. All that happens at any point of this musical space has more than a local effect. It functions not only in its own plane, but also in all other direction and planes, and is not without influence at remote points.[182]

The architectonics of such a condensation, demands something of perception,[183] or even more, it requires a new mode of sensorial approach:

> *...the unity of musical space demands an absolute and unitary perception.* In this space, as in Swedenborg's heaven (described in Balzac's *Seraphita*) there is no absolute down, no right or left, forward or backward. Every musical configuration, every movement of tones has to be comprehended primarily as a mutual relation of sounds, of oscillatory vibrations, appearing at different places and times. To the imaginative and creative faculty, relations in the material sphere are as independent from directions or planes as material objects are, in their sphere, to our perceptive faculties ... a musical creator's mind can operate subconsciously with a row of tones, regardless of their direction, regardless of the way in which a mirror might show the mutual relations, which remain a given quality (ibid., p. 223, Schoenberg's emphasis).

Or, in other words, one operates here, like in a dream, if only because, it is ultimately consciousness as the organ of perception that registers its multi-media choreography: "...the desire for a conscious control of the new means and forms will arise in every artist's mind; and he will wish to know *consciously* the laws and rules which govern the forms which he has conceived '*as in a dream*' [my emphasis]" (ibid., p. 218). All this, is not an empty desire, but is matched precisely in its parameters, by the identity and the space of dreams, as elaborated by Freud, and thus corresponds to the general model of the psyche: "…dream-work is under some kind of necessity to combine all the sources which have acted as stimuli for the dream into a single unity of the dream itself" (SE 4: 179). This unity is achieved by virulent juxtapositions which create a type of collage, or *bricolage*:

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[182] Schoenberg, "Composition with Twelve Tones", in *Style and Idea*, p. 220, Schoenberg's emphasis.

[183] In his 1912 Manifesto *On the Nature of Visions*, Oskar Kokoschka writes: "This change in oneself, which follows on the vision's penetration of one's very soul, produces the state of awareness, of expectancy. At the same time there is an outpouring of feeling into the image which becomes, as it were, the soul's plastic embodiment. This state of alertness of the mind or consciousness has, then, a waiting, receptive quality... The life of consciousness is boundless... [W]hen we no longer inhabit our perceptions they do not go out of existence; they continue as though with a power of their own, awaiting the focus of another consciousness. There is no more room for death; for though the vision disintegrates and scatters, it does so only to reform in another mode" (in Caws, p. 252).

> Thus speeches in dreams have a structure similar to that of breccia, in which largish blocks of various kinds of stone are cemented together by a binding medium (SE 5: 419).

The binding agent which connects this bric-a-brac is nothing else than simultaneity of occurrence, the bare bone minimum of any harmony (precisely the threshold form which Schoenberg starts out) inscribed in the method of association:

> Our perceptions are linked with one another in our memory – first and foremost according to simultaneity of occurrence. We speak of this fact as 'association' (SE 5: 539).

In the course of discussing chorale harmonization, Schoenberg presents such type of generic organicism, as an example of how tones are combined and harmonies created, when things are taken down to the level of least resistance:

> Such mosaic-like assemblage of parts [in a chorale, via contrasts] permits no very complicated relationships and favours as its unifying element, the principle of more or less simple repetitions. What draws out the movement latent in an idea, through which alone an idea acquires life, are especially the contrasts produced by the simple digression from the key. These contrasts are only moderate; they are not so great as to make connection difficult. What binds them together is the uniformity of the rhythmic movement, the straightforwardness, the simplicity, and above all the key; what separates them, what makes the subdivisions, is actually something negative: the virtually complete lack of motivic activity in development and connection. Thanks to this absence of motivic obligations, which keeps the parts from being more closely connected, the unconnected parts have no particular duty toward one another; perhaps they are on the whole just next to one another more than in relation to one another (*Theory of Harmony*, pp. 289–90).

This kind of simple being side by side will be further radicalized by Schoenberg in his 12-tone technique. It is through it, that a state of lowered resistance, becomes something close to a frantic movement of particles of an expending gas (a metaphor that Schoenberg uses to describe music, as we have seen) perhaps because the censorship as the super-ego or as tonality (the censorship that a composer applies to himself, and the rules of harmony reinforce in him) does not perceive such innocuous combinations as a threat. It is the task of both dreams, as well as the liberated harmonic structures, to get around the watchful eye of the censor, and to combine things in a way, that can be considered acceptable. Schoenberg's entire theoretical argument rests on this notion: that harmony, the way we should conceive of it, is not a deliberate challenge to the established harmonic rules, but simply their logical extension, their freeing from the limit of a psychology[184] that exaggerates the parts that are remembered, and hushes the ones that are crucial, but consigned to a sort of immemorial/immaterial 'holding cell'.

In order to make memory or remembering not a mere commemoration (a sort of forgetting through a recollection) one needs to deal with spatial arrangements, which stimulate intervallic relationships, by playing with the notion of distance and proximity. It is here, that our narrative comes full circle, almost to the point of its origin, which started from the idea of removal and (at the same time) closeness, confined in the occurrence of the symptom (generally speaking) and especially in the patient-as-catalyst phenomenon (Anna O., to take a primary example). Schoenberg, according to his own estimation, learns his theory of harmony from his pupils, just as Freud does through his patients. "This book I have learned from my pupils" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 1) is the first sentence of the entire manuscript. Reserving judgement as to the accuracy and truthfulness of such assessments (and they are surely, at least in part, exaggerated) the important idea here is a certain notion of 'proxemics' (as the study of distances), of removal that looks beyond the immediacy of senses' prospective powers, to find what is necessary but deficient, elsewhere, beyond the vanishing point or the horizon line, or even finding it outside of one's initial expertise, through one's patients and pupils – an archetypal experience, which stands as an emblem of the entire 'out of bounds' complex in Freud and Schoenberg, respectively.

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[184] At one point, in the *Harmonielehre,* Schoenberg writes: "We can transmit or portray only that which has boundaries. The creative imagination, however, can envision the unbounded, or at least the apparently unbounded. Thus in art we always represent something unbounded by means of something with boundaries" (p. 204).

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Our task, all along, has been, not only to show an area of convergence between Freud and Schoenberg (as the two radically outstanding personalities of fin de siècle) but through them, to arrive at the logic, the *Geist* of that time, of which they are an expression, and which is now built into our own environment and its perceptive acumen, as a matter of course, *sui generis*. Schoenberg's *Zeitgeist* awareness, for instance, encompasses the cultural and artistic aspects of reality, which are wrapped up in the idea of distance, discussed in a manner remarkably similar to that of Benjamin and Simmel:

> There is a certain distance, from which we can really detect only the spirit (*Geist*) of the century. He who can set himself far enough apart, will detect the spirit of mankind. Individualities disappear at this distance, but what they express – mankind, the best that is in it – becomes visible. The highest pinnacles, which are most accessible to the observer, into which the capillaries lift the finest and best from the depths, these alone set forth the spirit of mankind. Thus, increasing distance, initially reductive, once again magnifies: the individuals, the pinnacles, become visible again, even if in a different way. One sees that they are related and how they are related, that they are coherent among themselves; one no longer sees what proximity revealed, one no longer sees that they were sharply separate; *but the relationships are not those of art, not those of the techniques of art; they are rather deeper ones* (*Theory of Harmony*, pp. 411–12).

One would be remiss, not to recognize in the above passage a similarity between Benjamin's concept of 'aura' or Simmel's theory of aesthetics, as distance management procedures, that situate the individual, in the mass of social and communicative anonymity. We can even find a premonition of Breton's seismographic personality in Schoenberg, which sees anew, because it finds sensitivity, a different form of impressionism: "Perhaps the future of our music speaks through this freshness [of new chords]. It is heard only by those who are highly sensitive to impressions, the impressionists. The impressionist's organ [of perception] is a mechanism of extraordinary fine tuning, a seismograph, which registers the slightest motion" (ibid., p. 402). Essential is the elasticity found in the awareness of being away, on and at the margin, were spaces, identities and through them the self, become liminal, i.e., divested of the burden that limits impose, because it is the limit that now becomes the principle of apprehension. This is how analysis, as the most basic hum-drum of existential shimmer, is liberated from its carefully measured dispensation (from its 'grammar'). According to this principle (the type of analytics which blossoms at the turn of the last century) true art or even science, only takes place at the point where analysis is not simply *applied* to objects in space, but where space itself becomes analytical, where it is in the throes of incessant scrutiny that takes as its building blocks not rationality but its failure – the many failed connections (*Fehlleistungen*) that express the invariant, unconsciously motivated element of any phenomenon; an operation which also rouses towards a reconstruction of reality:

> ...for we must always be prepared to drop our conceptual scaffolding if we feel that we are in a position to replace it by something that approximates more closely to the unknown reality (SE 5: 610).

Schoenberg is the model of such demolition where conceptual scaffolding (in his case tonality) is dropped and remodelled, becoming impulse-driven and under the directive of a different responsibility – the responsibility towards distance, and hence, towards the unknown itself.

The concept of parapraxis (the somewhat inaccessible translation of *Fehlleistung* into English) known in popular parlance as the 'Freudian slip', is introduced by Freud in 1901, in one of his most widely read books – *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*. It is in the course of that exposition, which relates the murkiness of the psyche to the most mundane reality, where Freud shows that failed connections, as misfires of signification (through slips of the tongue, forgetting, or any other 'misdirectionality', whether in thinking, writing or hearing) is a compromise-building exercise between the unacknowledged wish, and its actual fulfillment, which, very often is so repressed, that it will not even be allowed the expression of a clearly stated objective. Viewed from the perspective of its own 'operational dynamics', failed connections are an exercise in 'distantiation', or a 'distant education' of sorts, since they bring closer that far-off element, which is otherwise inapprehensible, and instruct the subject in it, while still keeping the complex far enough, to fend off the potentially pathological consequences of 'overzealous' proximity. Failed connections, then, set the entire distance-proximity matrix in motion, but given the fact that they always transpire accidentally and by chance, they also launch a sequencing procedure which regulates the intervals of space dynamically, thus making that space itself into something like a sliding series, full of slips and missing links. Schoenberg's entire musical output, especially 'what happens' in his 12-tone method, is, in fact, a conglomeration of such failed connections, not only because these are the connections that would not be allowed under the standard system of harmony, but also because they are driven by unconscious impulses, as Schoenberg himself says on many occasions. Contrary to all appearances, tones in Schoenberg's system, are not free flowing entities (just like the psyche is not), but connected and bound by a procedure, which, in itself, is an unintended consequence, as much as a deliberate act of failure and 'disfunctionality'. English, again very clumsily, refers to it as cathexis, and Freud calls it simply *occupation* (*Besetzung*).

It is precisely the task of dreams to deal with unconscious energies in the manner of such binding as occupation; a way of channelling that tones and chords, as sonic impulses also exhibit as their most natural form of self expression, as is the case, for instance, with the seventh chord: "The seventh is an aggressive tone [*ein Strebeton*], that is, a tone exhibiting drive [*ein Ton, der zwingenden Trieb zeigt*] toward resolution into another (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 87). All occupation, is, of course, aggression, which is motivated by a desire to be otherwise, or somewhere else, and to possess these conditions. But the *Strebeton* – 'aggressive tone', is in fact closer to the 'desiring tone' which is under the 'compulsive drive' (*zwingender Trieb*) towards a resolution in another.

Schoenberg sees all tones, as such aggressive/desiring 'machines', which always aspire towards an occupation of a different space, since they consistently lead away from the tonal centre, no matter how hard one attempts to control them. Occupation, then, is an economic system, which approaches phenomena through the garbled giving-taking relationship (very similar to the strangeness and irrationality that we have explored at the beginning of this chapter, through our two epigraphs) which displaces energies form the 'mortuary' of the unconscious, and applies them (very often in an intense and extremely condensed manner) to other configurations, phenomena and objects. This is also why occupation is the energetic principle behind all symptom-building, since symptoms occupy spaces, that could extend from a repossession of an arm or a leg, go through one's mouth and ear, to finally rest and be deposited in one's immediate or more distant environment. As we recall, Anna O.'s symptom topography, concentrated on her hearing (not being able to understand her native tongue) as well as her mouth (not being able to speak it).

The capture that occupation attempts to effectuate is best understood through the complex which has been a constant recurrence in our narrative, the distance-proximity interchange. If one thinks about distances, a realization that they, at the bottom are inadvertently failed-connections of sorts, becomes inescapable. Being such, distances are always already psychic/psychological events, moreover, events that create enough tension, for which an outlet needs to be found. The question distances present, is one of potential inhabitation: how can one know of and be, there, where things are unavailable to immediate perception. This is where the desire and the wish are found, since these are two of the possible connections that bring distances closer, without negating the tension of the far-off, what I have already discussed under the concepts of expectation and the ruin. Being a personality of the fin de siècle (another nodal point of its logic) Schoenberg considers the entire distance-proximity problematic in the *Theory of Harmony*.

In fact, given that his entire 'system' rests on dealing with sound, Schoenberg derives the third, and perhaps the best solution of the complex of distance, because unlike wishes or desires, sound operates through immediacy, through instant analysis of close and far, in that it is the rhythmic interplay of materializations and almost instantaneous dissipations. His treatise considers the matter both culturally (how does one leave the proximity, the home, of tonality?) and technically (how can one deal with distant relationships in a hospitable way?). The trick, as we learn early on in the *Theory of*

Harmony, is to acquire *respectable* distance, something that the 'handicraft of art' carries within its own structure:

> Even if the higher sphere transcending ordinary purposes (*Zwecklosigkeit*) is the region in which the artist orients himself, still, attention to purposes (*Zweckmässigkeit*) forms the only dependable basis for teaching the handicraft of art. This pedagogy thrives on and exists by virtue of its efforts to establish as obligatory what with the artist was utmost freedom. And the power of this utmost freedom, viewed from the proximity of the handicraft of art, is inconceivable without laws or purposes. Here, only one who is far enough removed from such an expanse can see the true picture. Here, proximity makes petty, whereas only respectful distance reveals the true greatness (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 126).

Respectable distance, is not simply a 'being away' but a carefully calibrated increment, which presents us with a *compromise* between the ear and the eye, a sort of hybrid, genetically engineered entity, that we heard Hermann Bahr speak about; an eye which listens and the ear which sees:

> If proximity teaches us diversity, so distance teaches us the general. If the present shows us the divergencies of individuals, so the median distance shows the similarity of means; but the great distance in turn cancels out both, shows the individuals as different, but even so also shows what really connects them. It shows what is most important about the individual, that most profound introspection into and absorption with his own nature, that which leads him to express: the nature of mankind (ibid., p. 412).

The formula of a spoiled and decadent economy repeats itself: one must give up everything, in order to gain what, in the end, might prove to be impossible. We have observed it at work, already in Nietzsche's Dionysian moment, when individuality is immersed in the anonymity of distance, which (given its proportions) reveals the workings of binding relationships (without their bondage, of which individuality is but one expression) in the intimacy of their instantaneous presence. This is the same phenomenon which Schoenberg notes and classifies as the unconscious ear; an ear that can perceive and see, what isolated vision, is blind to. For ultimately: "What really matters [is] the ability to listen to oneself, to look deep into oneself, that can hardly be acquired; certainly it cannot be taught (ibid., p. 413). Is this why Schoenberg desires to compose "…an oratorio that becomes visible and audible",[185] as he writes to Kandinsky in 1912, about Balzac's *Seraphita* (a project that never gets off the ground)? Is this also why, he considers a cinematographic version of his opera *Die Glückliche Hand*, a screenplay which, as he writes to Emil Hertzka:

> …should have the effect (not of a dream) but of chords. Of music. It must never suggest symbols, or meaning, or thoughts, but simply the play of colors and forms. Just as music never drags a meaning around with it, at least not in the form in which it [music] manifests itself, even though meaning is inherent in its nature, so too this should simply be like sounds for the eye, and so far as I am concerned everyone is free to think or feel something similar to what he thinks or feels while hearing music?[186]

And we know, that Schoenberg also paints,[187] even though, it seems that it is the uniqueness of Schoenberg's sound that appeals to Kandinsky (who writes unsolicited to the composer after a concert of his music that took place on January 1, 1911 in Munich), not Schoenberg's visual translations of its logic, for the latter, is Kandinsky's business, given that he derives an entire system of painting in sound, in the manner of visual-acoustics: "I am very sorry that you don't like my pictures very much".[188] So what connects these two, the same connection that we have been exploring between Schoenberg and Freud, and which underpins the entire scene of the fin de siècle, is a specific logic of listening and attention, which rests on principles that lie equally beyond the purely visual or musical. It is a logic of analytical plasticity, which liberates forms, as it fragments and throws into decay; a space not of dissonance or consonance, but *assonance*.

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[185] Letter to Kandinsky, August 19, 1912 (in *A Schoenberg Reader*, p. 113).

[186] Letter to Emil Hertzka, 1913 (in *A Schoenberg Reader*, p. 87).

[187] Most of Schoenberg's ninety or so paintings, date from the period between 1907–1910 (Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, p. 112).

[188] Schoenberg in a letter to the painter, December 14, 1911 (in *A Schoenberg Reader*, p. 103).

The ability to listen to oneself, of course, is the modus operandi of the psychoanalytic technique, which like the dream uses both the eye and the ear to elaborate a surface on whose premises a new history, a new reality, can be written. In this sense, it does not matter whether one uses the eye or the ear in their functional specificity, whether one recuperates them as organic mechanical devices. What does matter is the space that binds acoustically; a space that lowers thresholds and plays with responsibilities that allow for a fantastic juxtaposition of its elements. This space cannot be learned or acquired, but rather it must be dug up from the cavity of one's being, loosened just enough, like a bad tooth (Breton). Everything else becomes merely symptomatic. And symptoms should either be eliminated altogether or read analogically, as information nodules that provide some guidance on the way towards the audio-visible reality. Here, the project is to surgically remove the formulaic individuality of the self (whether a person, an art object or an article of everyday use) and donate (like an organ transplant) a subjectivity that is a *plastic form*.

Can this be the reason why someone like Adolf Loos, despite his advanced deafness,[189] is drawn to Schoenberg's music? For what kind of music is it, in the end, that appeals to a deaf man? Perhaps the same one that grips the painter? Sound as pure energy, which had ripped off its stylistic clothing.

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[189] Stuckenschmidt writes: "Adolf Loos, in spite of his deafness, was an admirer of Schoenberg (p. 150). Schoenberg also recalls this episode in his diary: "Loos comes to the rehearsal. Is very nice. Especially to Webern. He finds a similarity between himself and me in that I make alterations in my compositions at rehearsals. But this is wrong: I don't work out the composition during the building, as he says, but on the contrary such alterations are very rare with me and are mostly only concerned with notation marks. But I didn't contradict him, because he was very amiable; and then, above all, he is so deaf that one can hardly talk to him; it would be exhausting for me to contradict him" (in Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, p. 157).

Adolf Loos became known as one of the most famous and controversial figures of fin de siècle Vienna and modernism in general, largely through his signature equation of ornament with crime. His project throughout, just as it is for the Secessionists,[190] is informed by the idea of renewal, in pursuit of a culture "...which lives in a new, free organization of things.[191] The source and direction of this new state of affairs, is the turn towards the "physical exhaustion" of things, where the material, whether wood, glass or metal, our clothing as well as our body, initiates the condition of commensurability with the psychological thought surface of our perception and intellect, thus creating a point of functional intersection with the truly modern spirit.

This type of new living involves the discretion and the decency of reconciliation and acceptance of the materiality, which, through simple historical presence, surrounds in its unavoidability. In Loos' words: "Men find the modern only in that what is actually possible".[192] Such immersion in reality, in its most basic materiality, rests on a certain sensitization, education and even rearing of the modern human sensibility. One of the most important tasks of such a lesson is to hammer in the point that modernity is not compatible with the production and exposition of the ornament, because: "The modern man, the man with modern nerves, does not need the ornament".[193] Unlike the prehistoric times, when people adorned their body with tattoos to inscribe the mystery of life onto the surface of their own skin, thus compensating for certain developmental and intellectual inadequacy, the man of today should realize that "…the ornament does not organically hang together with our culture, as well as that the ornament is no longer the expression of our culture" (*Ornament und Verbrechen*, p. 197). The mystery of the world, which the ornament meant to express, had become displaced into the material itself, since "materials are already mysterious substances" (ibid., p. 225). In fact, ornamentation, the aesthetics of its production and expression, creates the condition of repression and sickness: "Ornament is squandered work energy and through it squandered health" (ibid., p. 197). Even more interesting is Loos' conclusion that the producer of ornamentation, by whatever means, is a pathological case of misappropriated reality: "The modern ornamentalist is either a straggler or a pathological apparition" (ibid., p. 198).

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[190] Even though both the Secession and Loos seem to be on the same page philosophically, practically and functionally, they are miles apart. Loos violently opposes the Secessionist spirit of directed and deliberate aestheticism, not unlike Schoenberg's objection to the system of aesthetics based on laws and regulatory rules. Turning objects into the formalism and timelessness of art, at the cost of their most directly expressible and accessible identity – that of functionality, transitoriness and change, is seen as a wasteful application of energy by Loos. Only such time-imbedded identity creates the most appropriate individuality for the expression of modernity; it is the somewhat contradictory but truthful and honest durability found in and through the rhythm of decay in harmony with the time of the cultural and historical localization and its own, unique duration (dura-bility, the ability and potential to endure through its own unrepeatable time).

[191] Adolf Loos, "Ohne Vergoldeten Wagen", in *Ornament und Verbrechen*, p. 220, my translation.

[192] Adolf Loos, "Von der Sparsamkeit", in *Ornament und Verbrechen*, p. 220, my translation.

[193] Adolf Loos, *Ornament und Verbrechen*, p. 213.

The idea is to achieve the most basic, perfect and expressive form, which would simply and most efficiently reflect the reality at hand – or said another way, Loos' project aims at creating what we could call, balanced, adjusted and functional individuality, an identity that is the most suitable mechanism to cope with the modern world because it builds itself out of its material, which is enclosed in its own historical situation. Here, in turn, we can ask: how can something common serve as the most accurate and unique expression for an individual? The answer lies firmly in the definition of such an individuality, which operates not according to the principle of differentiation, of standing out and apart through surface inscriptions (clothing, behaviour, space design), something that ornamentation effectuates most poignantly, but rather according to the principle of temporary originality and aesthetic honesty/truth, in other words, of design which speaks the cultural language without repressing the spontaneous recovery of our own humanity, an opening towards 'freedom' which each historical age provides in its own disguised way. Only in this way can the tension between civilization/culture and the organic component of the body/psyche be reconciled and minimized. Here a series of cascading parallels to Freud and Schoenberg should become visible – I will only mention the most obvious one.

We only need to understand the ornament (in concert with Loos) in terms of repression of the material's original physical identity (whether that of sound or the psyche), a sort of cover up, to see how close Freud and psychoanalysis, as well as Schoenberg and his music, operate to the spirit of the aesthetic environment of the times. To say that Freud desires nothing else than the removal of a certain layer of ornamentation from the psychic apparatus, which has accumulated over time and now is superfluous, even damaging, is to re-vivify the original image of his clinical and theoretical attempts. In Freud's case, such a removal shows itself most vividly in the subject which had generated the most controversy around psychoanalysis – sexuality. Because what is needed is precisely the exposition of the fact that sexuality and the closely associated theory of the drives, is the *stuff* of human life, its basic building block, its materiality. In Freud's book, sexuality needs to be exposed in its most generic structure, as the surface on which everything else plays out. In this gesture, Freud attempts one of his most daring reversals: he tries to take the matter of sexuality away from under the umbrella of morality, and reduce it to simple physics, the generality of a certain state of affairs which is shared without exception, but through the cultural side and the personal history of the patient, shaped and sculpted into various readjustments, of which the most radical ones lead to pathological, psychic imbalance. The identity of preparation and pre-fabrication through repression and resistance is too costly to maintain. True liberation of the modern spirit lies in thinning out of the excesses of culture, and through this, the loss of idealistic individuality for a good measure of common identity which falls back into the arms of the libido, the force of the drives and their life affirming purpose. Such stripped down identity, is exactly what Schoenberg aims at, and to bolster his argument, he quotes Loos explicitly:

> This decoration with ornaments, 'tattooing', as Adolf Loos says, is a childish activity. I have no objection if the pupil undertakes an occasional correction in a piece he has completed, in which there are already passing tones and suspensions *that occurred to him simultaneously with the melody, as harmony*. He might, for example, improve a stiff-sounding connection with a passing tone or a faltering rhythm with a suspension… But what the pupil must strive for is the ability to *invent* these non-harmonic tones *together with the rest of the harmony* (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 340).

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And thus, all of us have become pupils, students of modernity, who try to make decisions about the everyday, the way these used to be treated aesthetically, when something about art needed to be decided. Art today seems to be almost grotesquely banal in comparison with the charge it arrogated to itself (for better or worse) at the turn of the 20th century, where it became the medium of dissemination and promulgation of a logic which always lay beyond it. This is certainly Paul Virilio's conclusion who speaks of the 'banalization of excess' through the loss of value, which is a way of becoming boundless:

> Without limits, there is no value; without value, there is no esteem, no respect and especially no pity… Already, more or less everywhere you turn, you hear the words that precede that fatal habituation to the banalization of excess. For certain philosophers the body is already no more than a phenomenon of memory, *the remnants of an archaic body* (*Art and Fear*, p. 63).

If art of the fin de siècle exposed something that it still attempted to bind and occupy, something which, since then, has become a generally available condition, as space which is even more analytical than anything previously seen or heard, and thus more violent and cruel, given that it dissects indiscriminately, then the question that arises is the old consideration of distances and their negation, and the price that must be exacted for it. This price is always technological in nature, rapped around the condition of inhumanity, not only because it raises the question of technology in its pure, means-end instrumentality, but because it releases the presence and the prospect (the expectation) of a technique of approach towards reality.

There is no doubt about the fact, that fin de siècle pre-figured, maybe even liberated, the psycho-pathology of violence, which the past century has carried through in the brilliance of scientific and technological prowess – we need only think here of the Futurists who exalted the beauty of war, or decadent 'poetry' (if indeed decadence can still be poetic) of someone like the Czech poet Jiří Karásek ze Lvovic, who writes in a dark-room, surrounded by the stench of decaying flowers. But this story, even if it makes for spectacular literature or scholarship, does not end, just as it did not begin there. This is why I disagree with Virilio's polemics of pessimism that sees only presence and thus no possibility; a pitiless present of inhuman and dumbfounding immediacy that cuts into experience like with a blunt knife. Because there is another side to the story, the one I have attempted to delineate; the story of a project for a new psychology and through it, a new mode of perception, that would give the modern individuality, a means of dealing with the always inescapable and necessary removal he or she feels, from the reality which overflows them. It is a psychology as distance, and of distance.

This is what the series of conceptual formulations (my own narrative's complex) attempted to untangle, as it complicated; a series of themes which, in the manner of Schoenberg's twelve tones, was repeated, in developing variations. This sequence, went roughly, as follows: symptom-decay-aesthetics-of-disappearance-culture-of-design-organicism-dissection-expectation-ruin-acoustics-of-space-space-as-stethoscope-distance-proximity-eye-ear-analysis-music-assonance.

Each and every one of these concepts, tried to carry the entire variation and variability of the subject matter, within its own limits, in this sense mimicking what Anton von Webern said about Schoenberg's D-minor Quartet: "There is no note, so to speak, in this work which is not thematic".[194] Even though, Schoenberg described an early incarnation of his technique, as 'the method of permanent variation',[195] we, just as he, must distance ourselves from its pull, and close, despite the fact that closing is hard, if not impossible.

In this manner, we are again at the head of what faces us continually, the awareness of our own situation, from which we must be able to recover because: "If we could look at the present from afar, then all our struggles would be over" (*Theory of Harmony*, p. 412). It is precisely this type of distance, this kind of procedure which inserts an interval between the present and its immediacy of presence, that Freud and Schoenberg attempt to recalibrate, and whose failure Paul Virilio bemoans as the new tyranny of the pitiless (art which has lost its power of representation), the inhuman, the non-emphatic (aesthetics which completely eliminates ethics). The distance that works as an opening to the possibility of expectation, when twisted around just slightly, releases profound consequences in that it becomes an expectancy – a pregnancy that awaits the monster whose existence is settled, and only the hour remains to be decided. Is this not the terror of our times, the terror of distance itself; the fear one feels in its wake, because it is terrorist in nature, in that the unknown is certain in its outcome? This question is perhaps the most pertinent conclusion that can be derived. And, in turn, it indicates one relatively acceptable summation: that today, more than ever, we are still lacking a *psychology of distances* that would allow for perception which is not simply a registry, but a mitigating agent of control.

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[194] Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, p. 84.
[195] Ibid., p. 118.

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Appendix

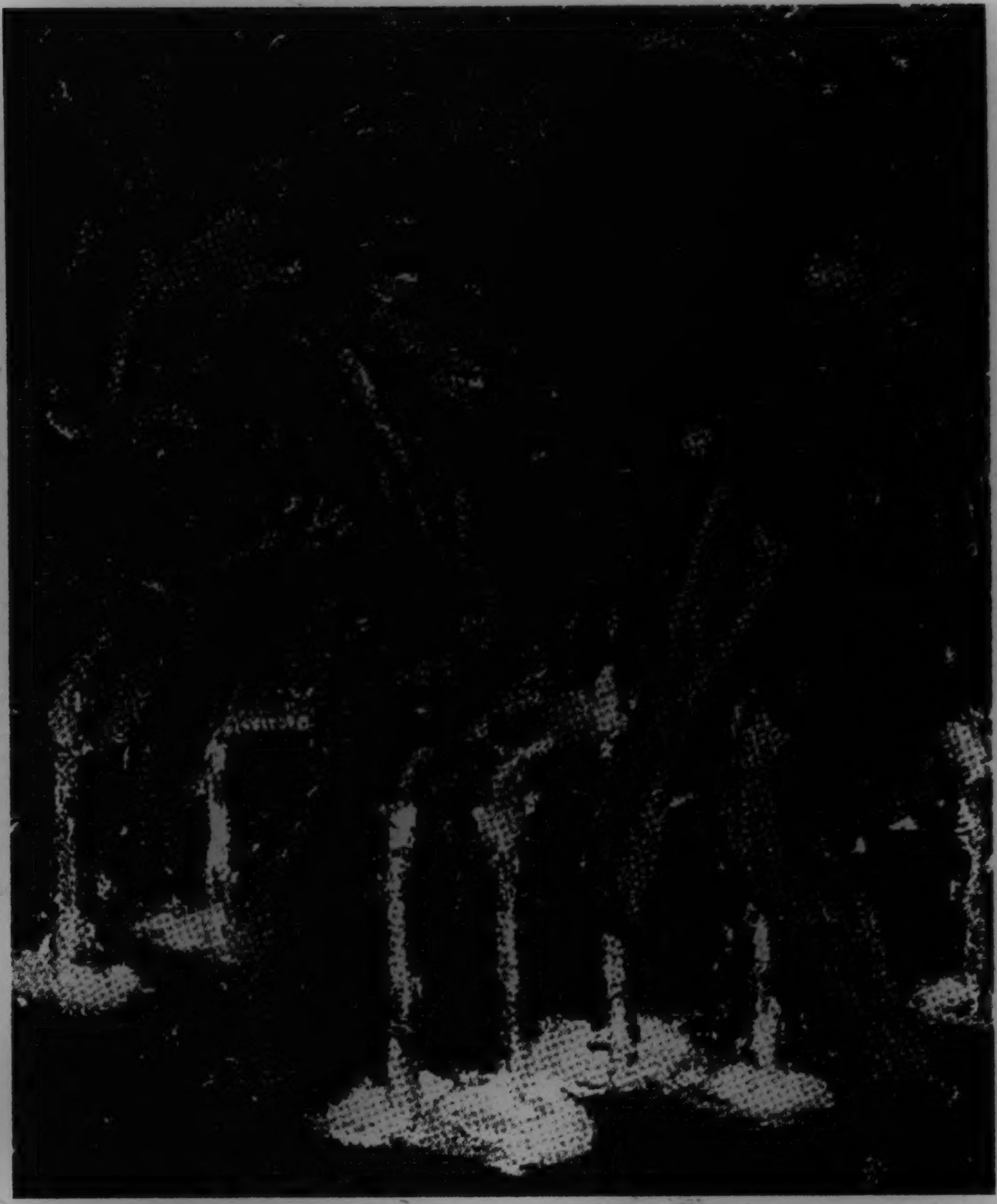

Figure 1. Emil Nolde, "Kerzentanzerinnen", 1912

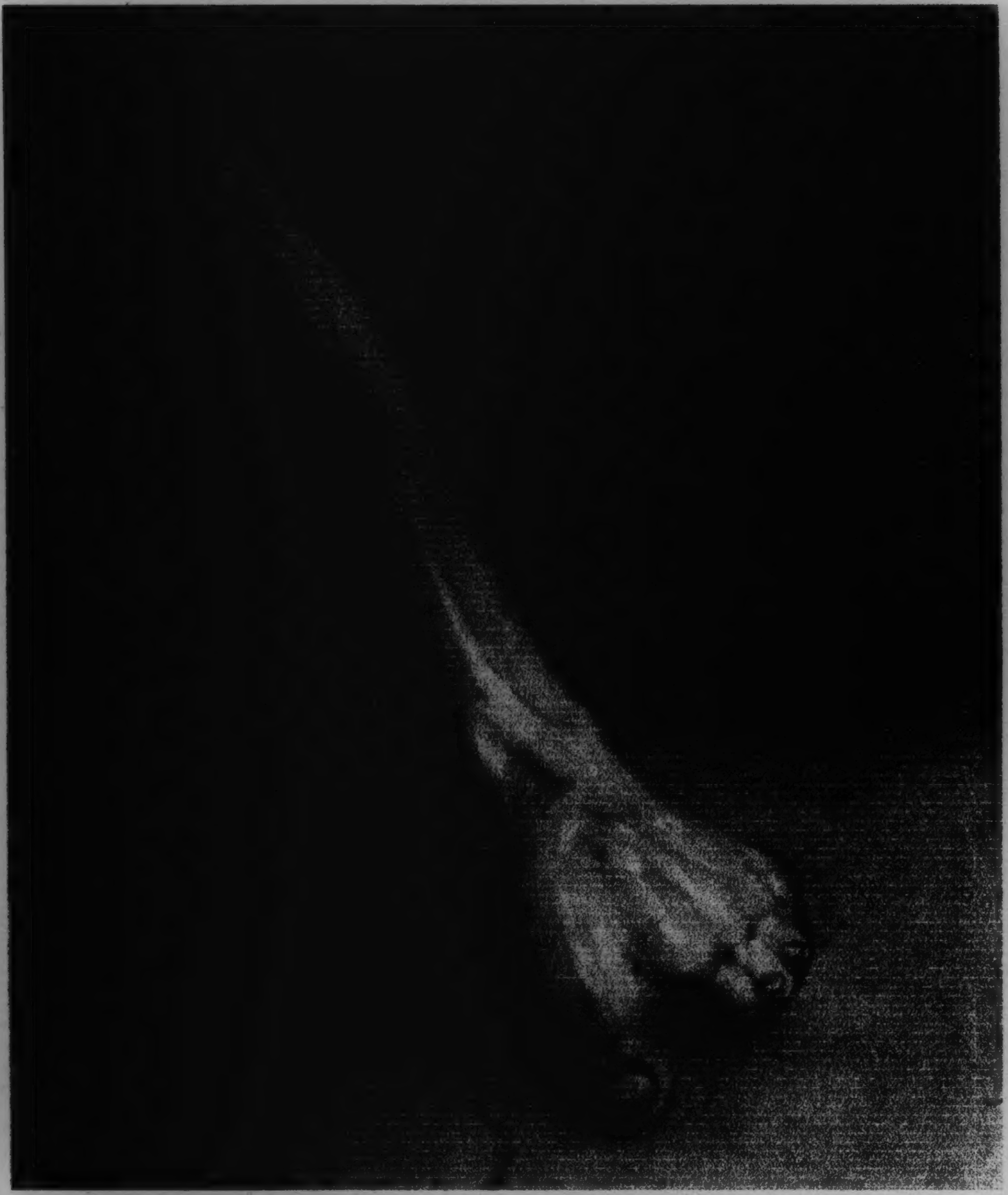

Figure 2. Alfred Kubin, "The Step", 1900-1903

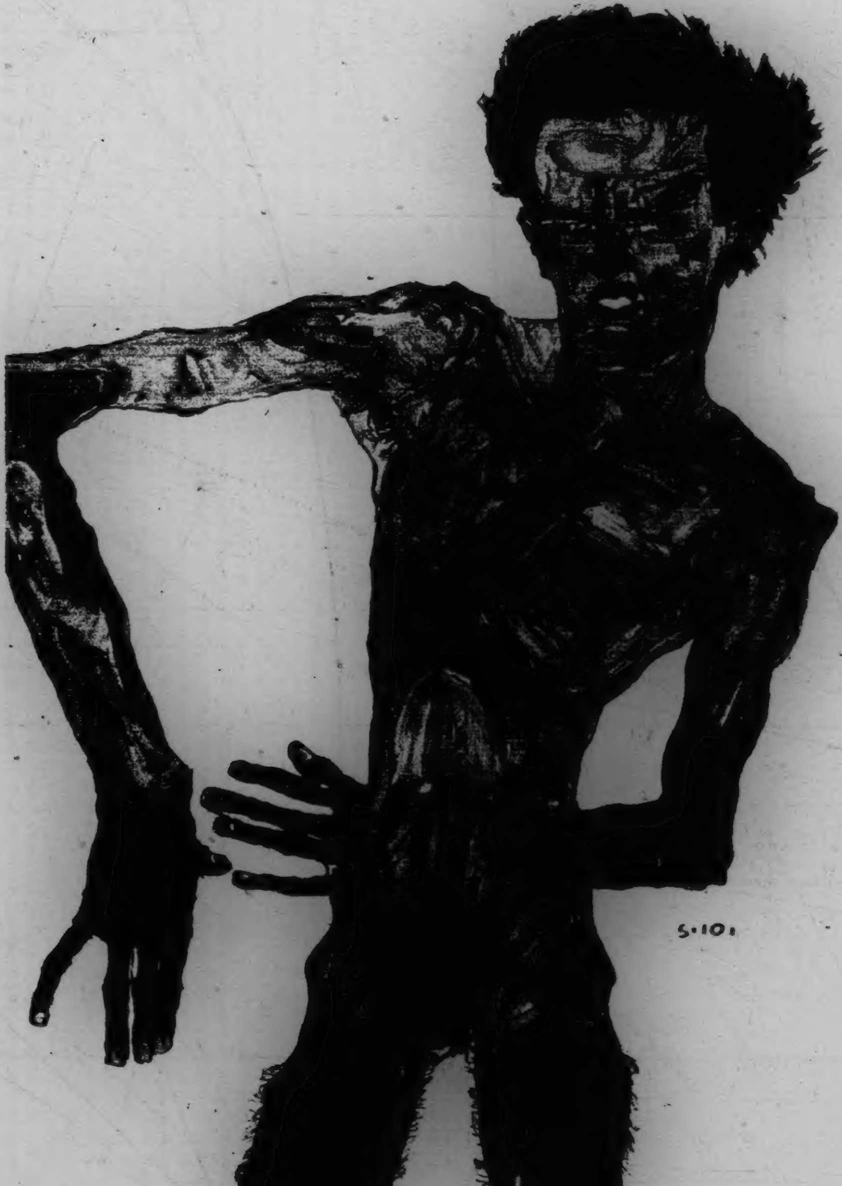

Figure 3. Egon Schiele, "Nude Self-Portrait, Grimacing", 1910

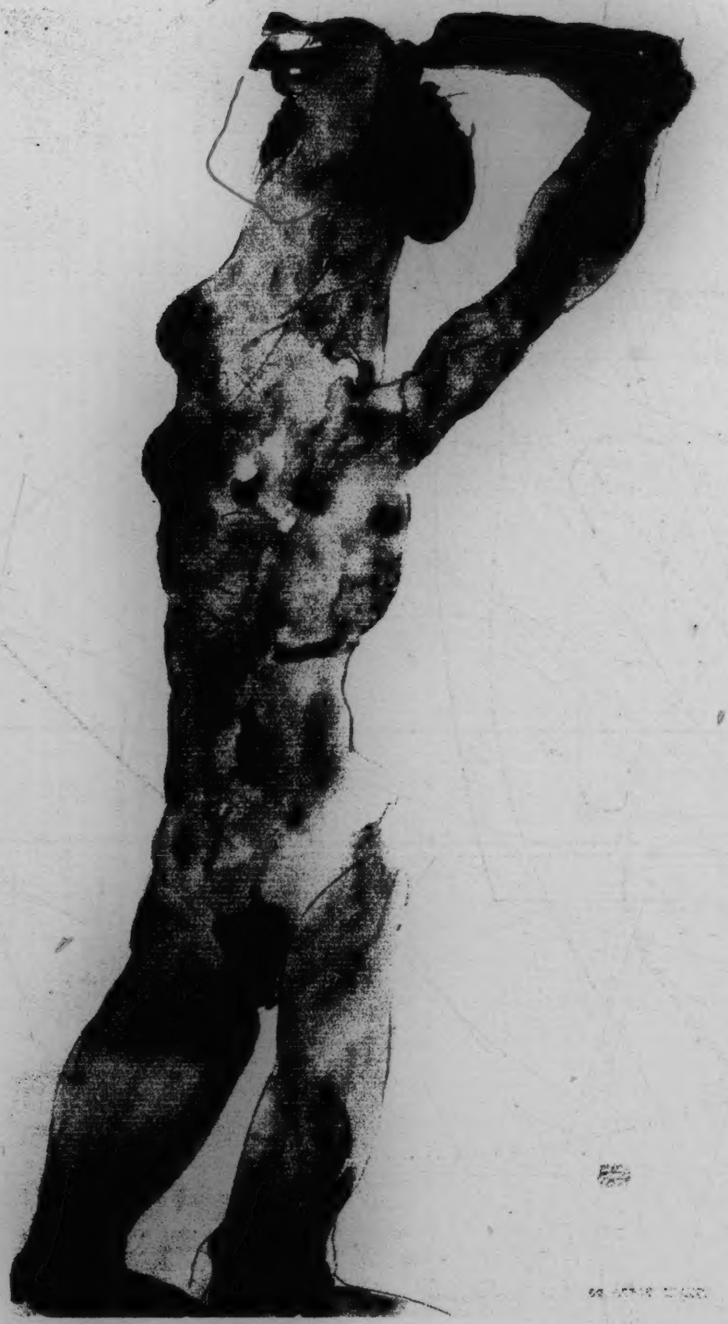

Figure 4. Egon Schiele, “Male Nude Act”, 1912

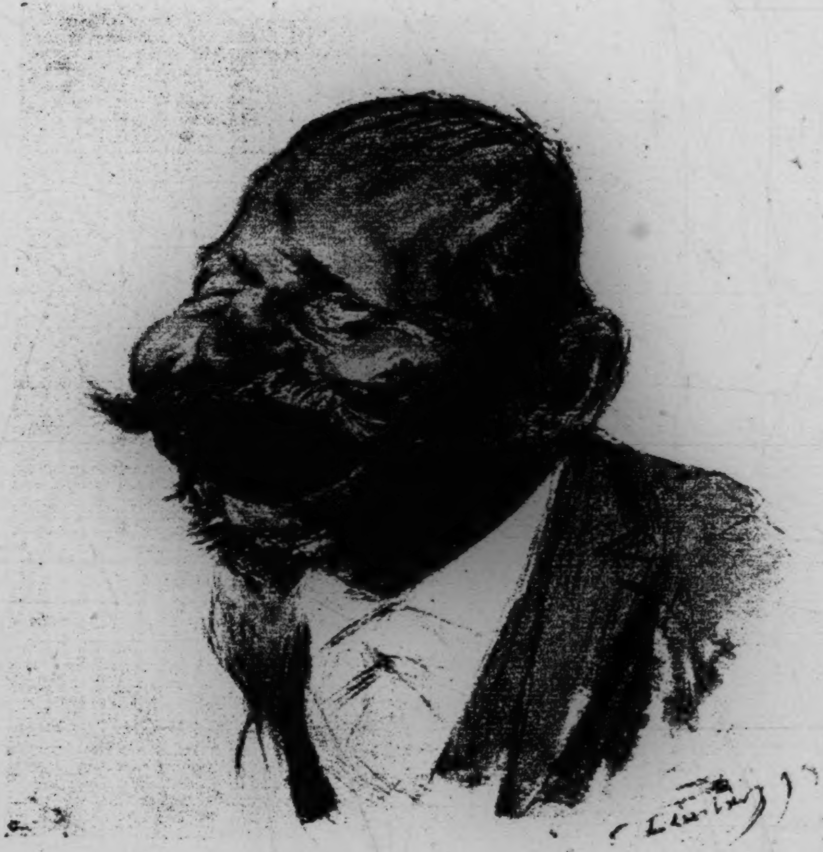

Figure 5. Charles Leandre, "Caricature", Ver Sacrum, 1900, I

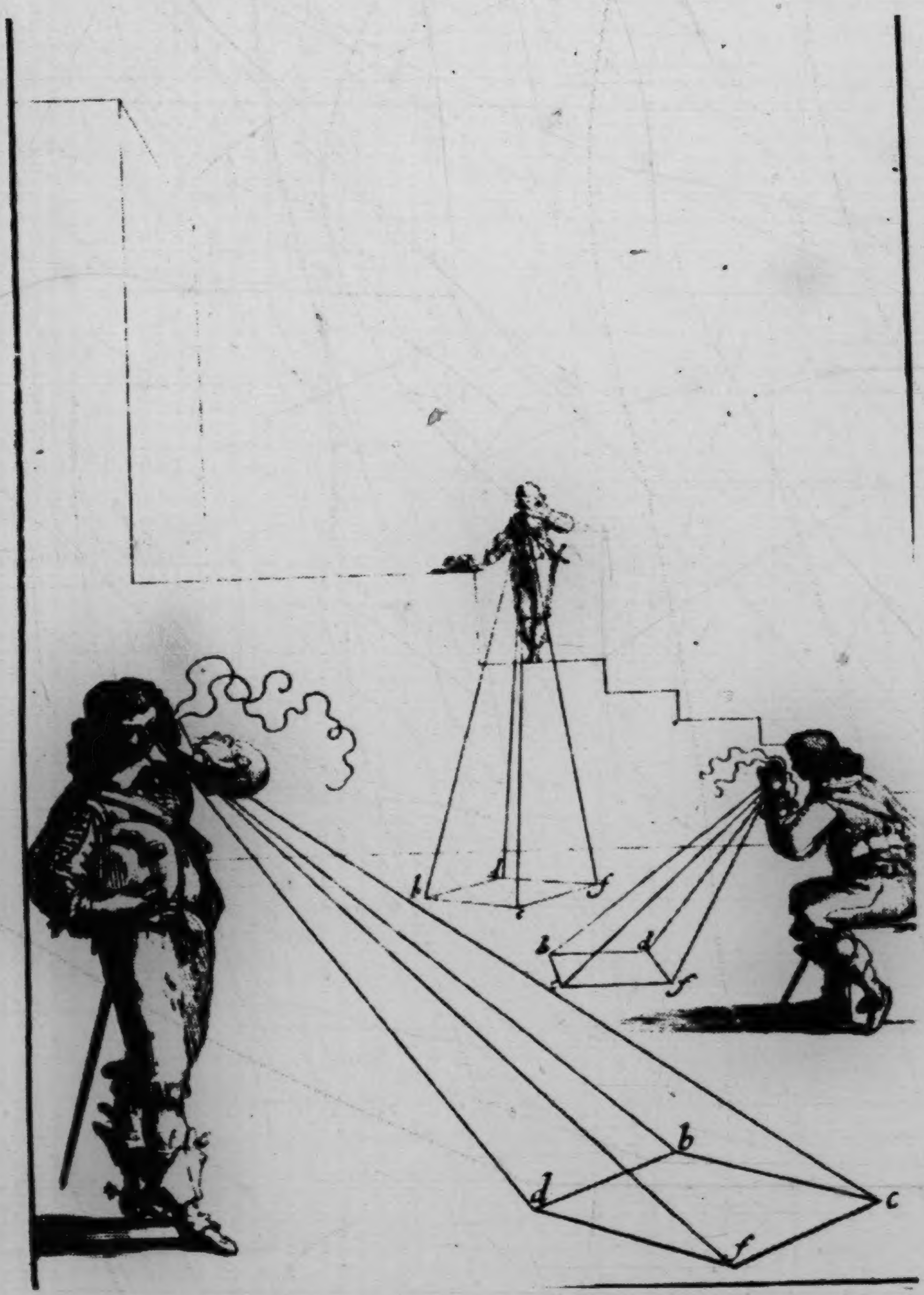

Figure 6. Abraham Bosse "Les Perspecteurs", 1648

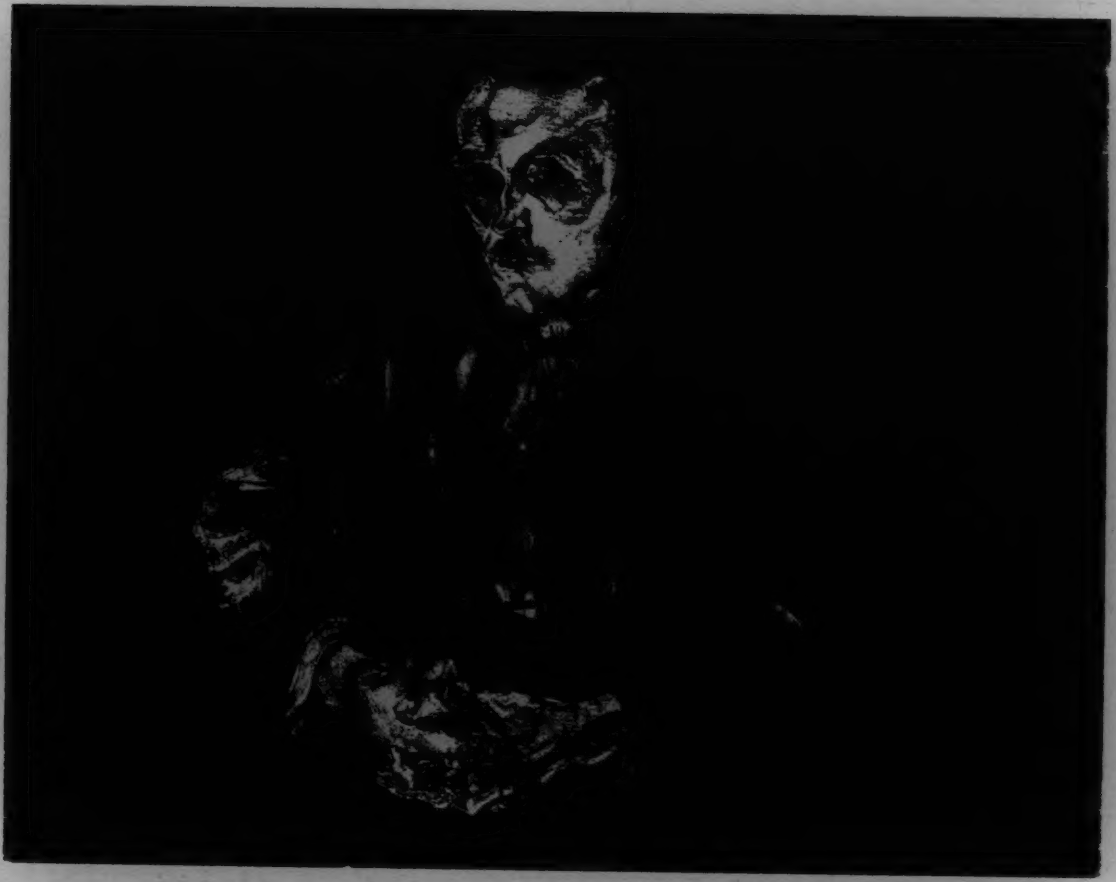

Figure 7. Oscar Kokoschka, "Adolf Loos", 1909

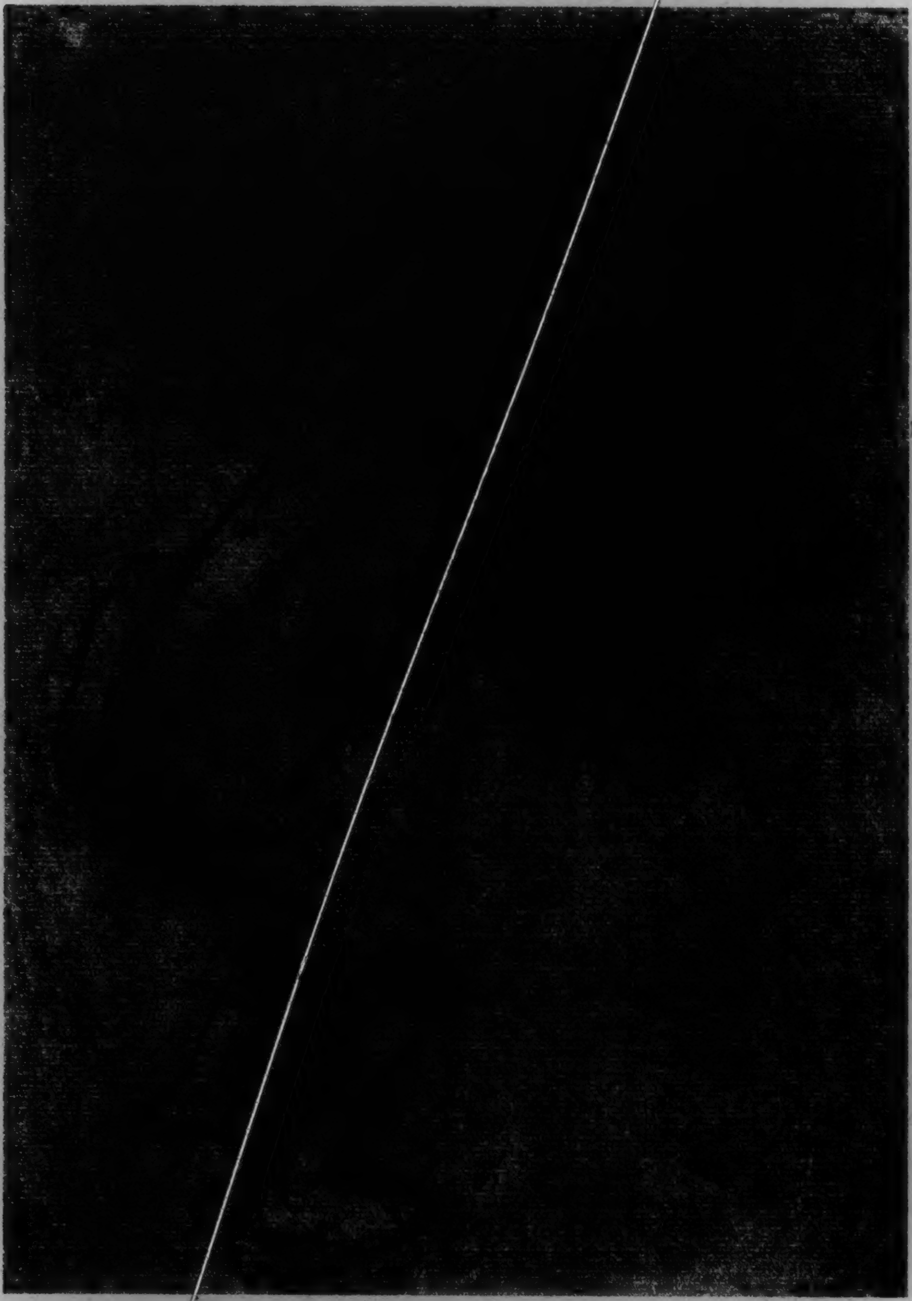

Figure 8. Oscar Kokoschka, "Nude with Back Turned", 1907

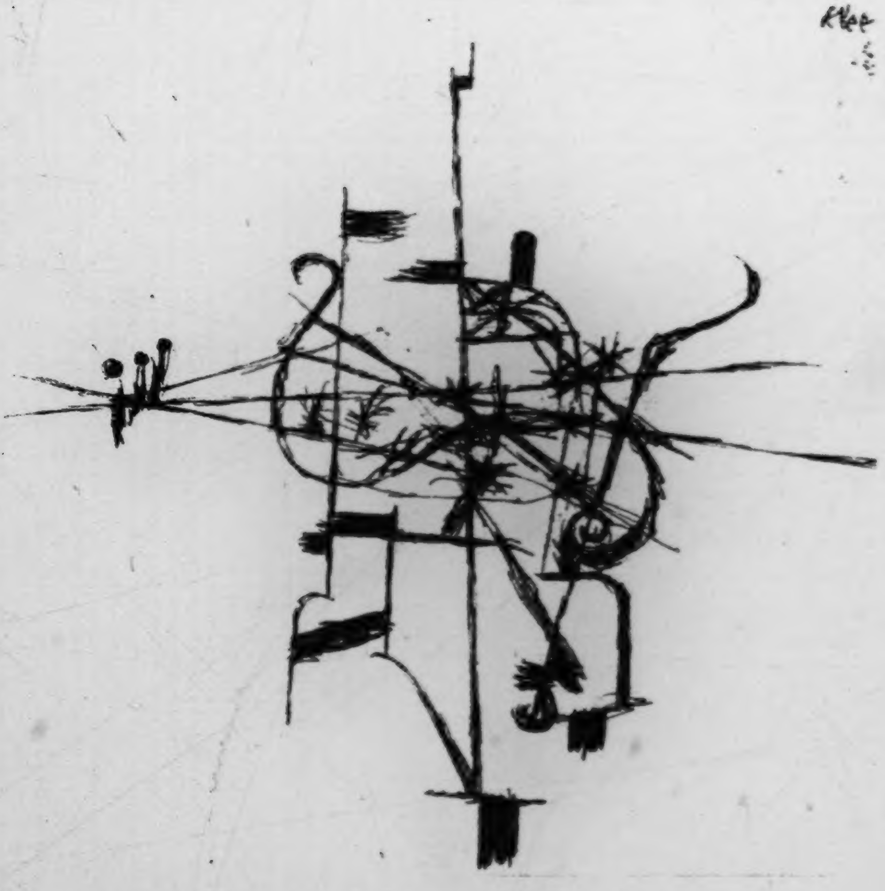

Figure 9. Paul Klee, "Instrument fuer die neue Musik", 1914

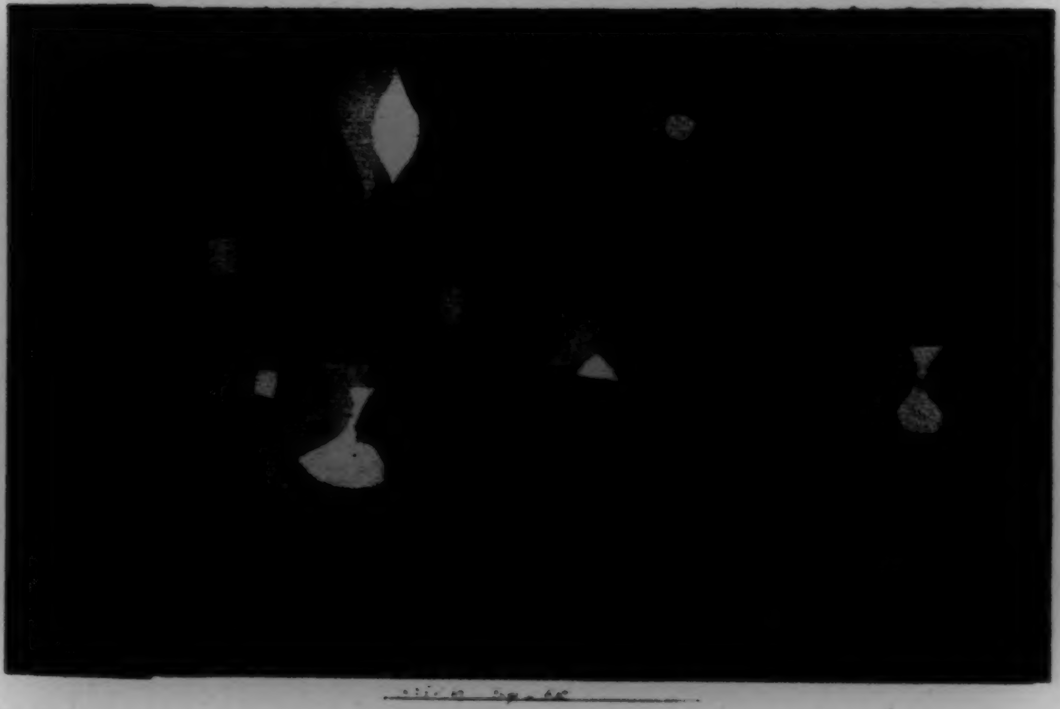

Figure 10. Paul Klee, “Fuge in Rot”, 1921

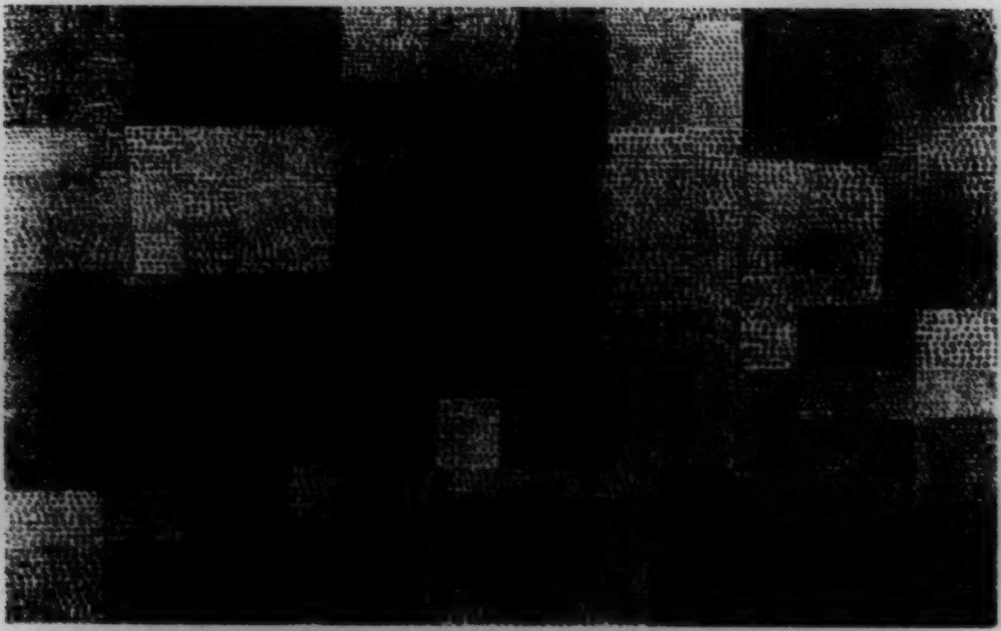

Figure 11. Paul Klee, "Polyphonie", 1932

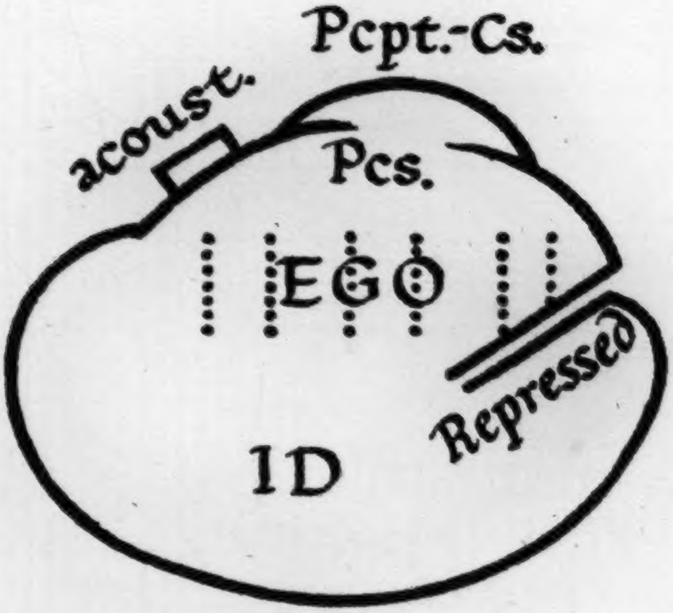
Pcpt.-Cs.
acoust.
Pcs.
EGO
Repressed
ID

FIG. 1.

Figure 12. Diagram from "Ego and the Id", 1923

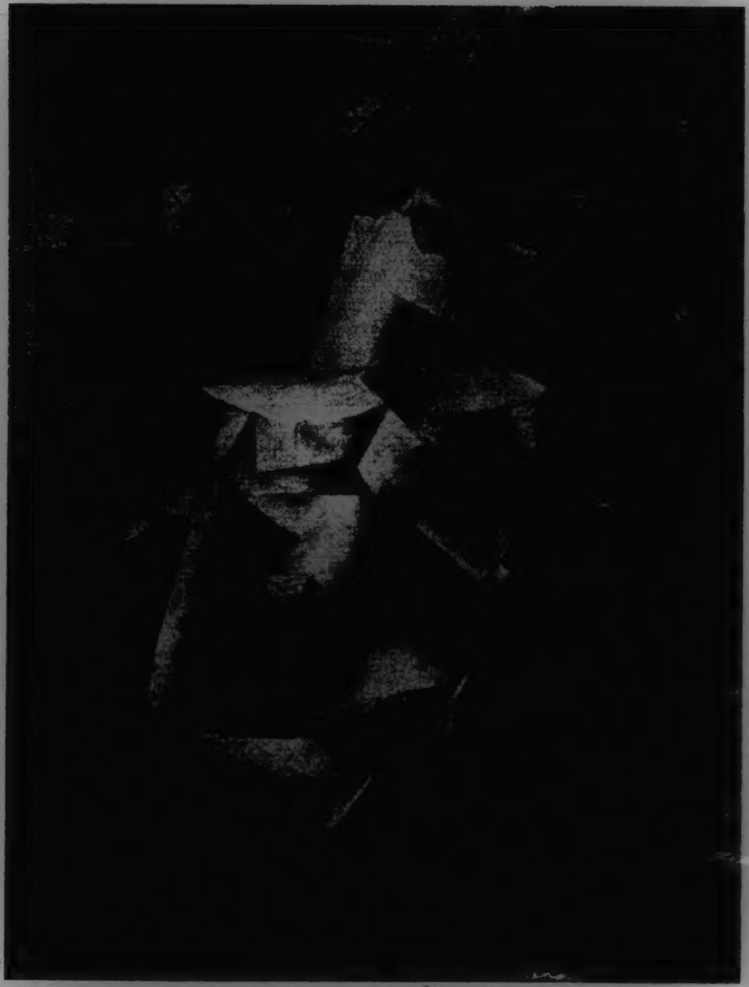

Figure 13. Pablo Picasso, "Girl with a Mandolin", 1910

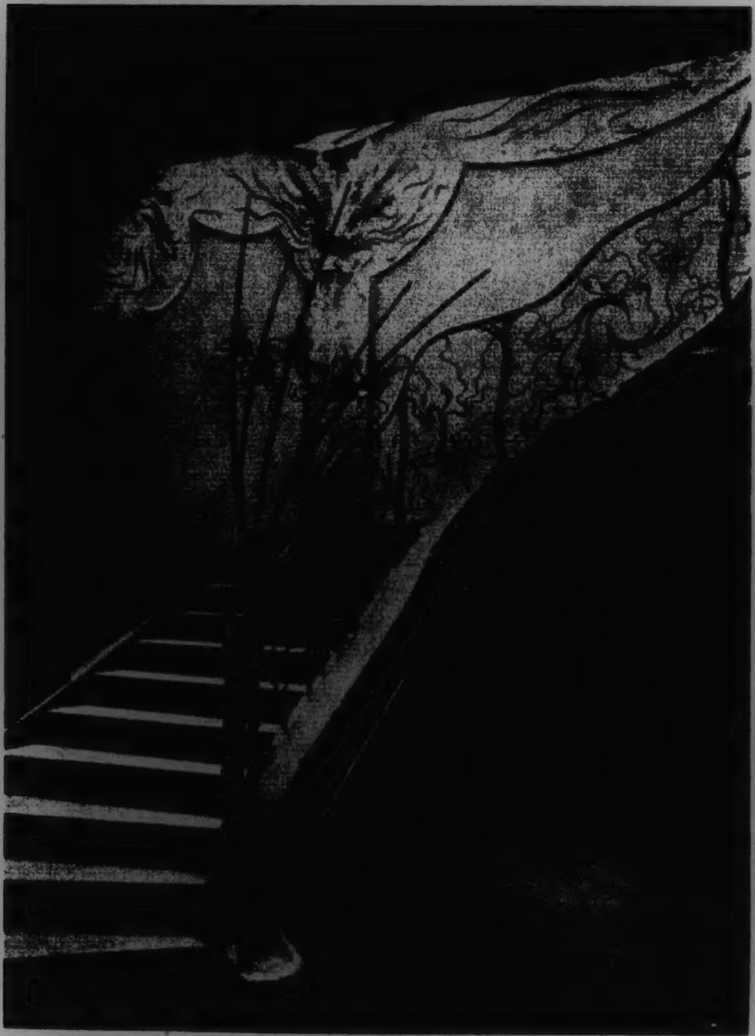

Figure 14. August Endell, Staircase, 1896/98

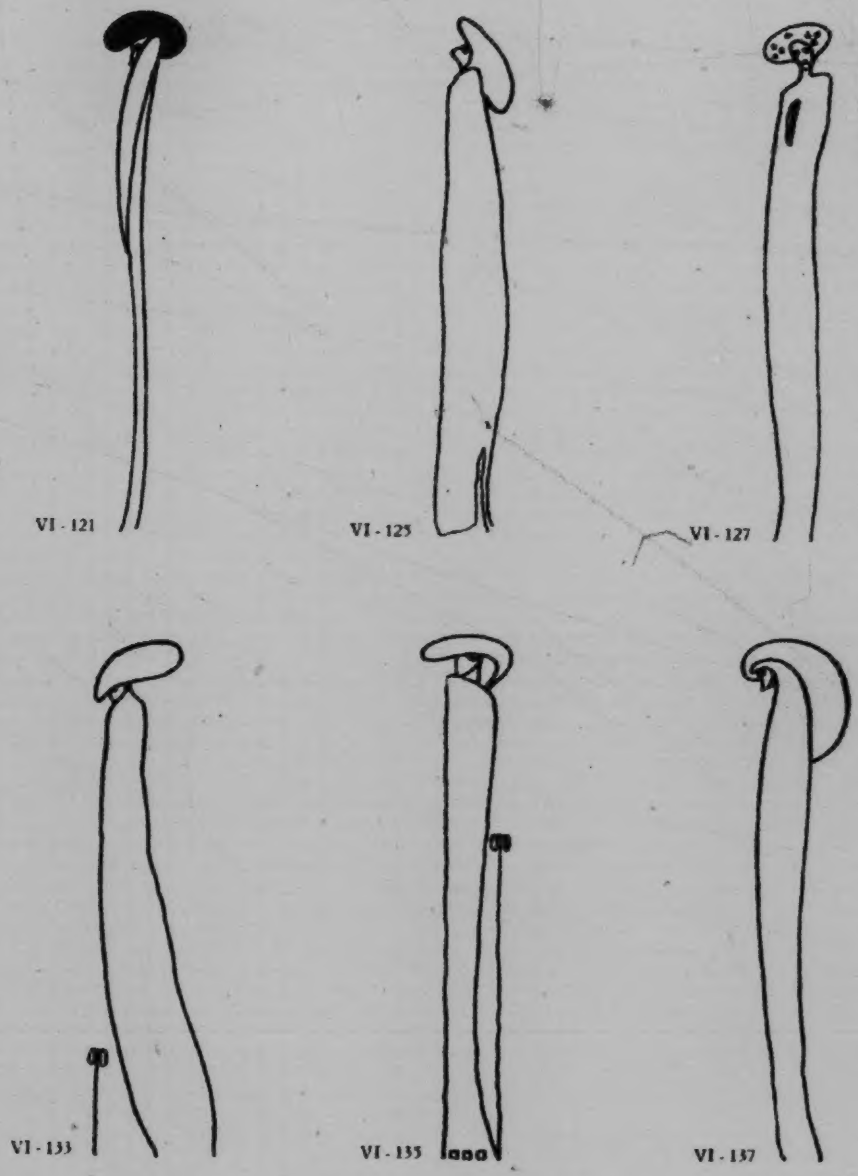
VI - 121
VI - 125
VI - 127
VI - 133
VI - 135
VI - 137

Figure 15. Josef Hoffmann, Ver Sacrum VI, 1901

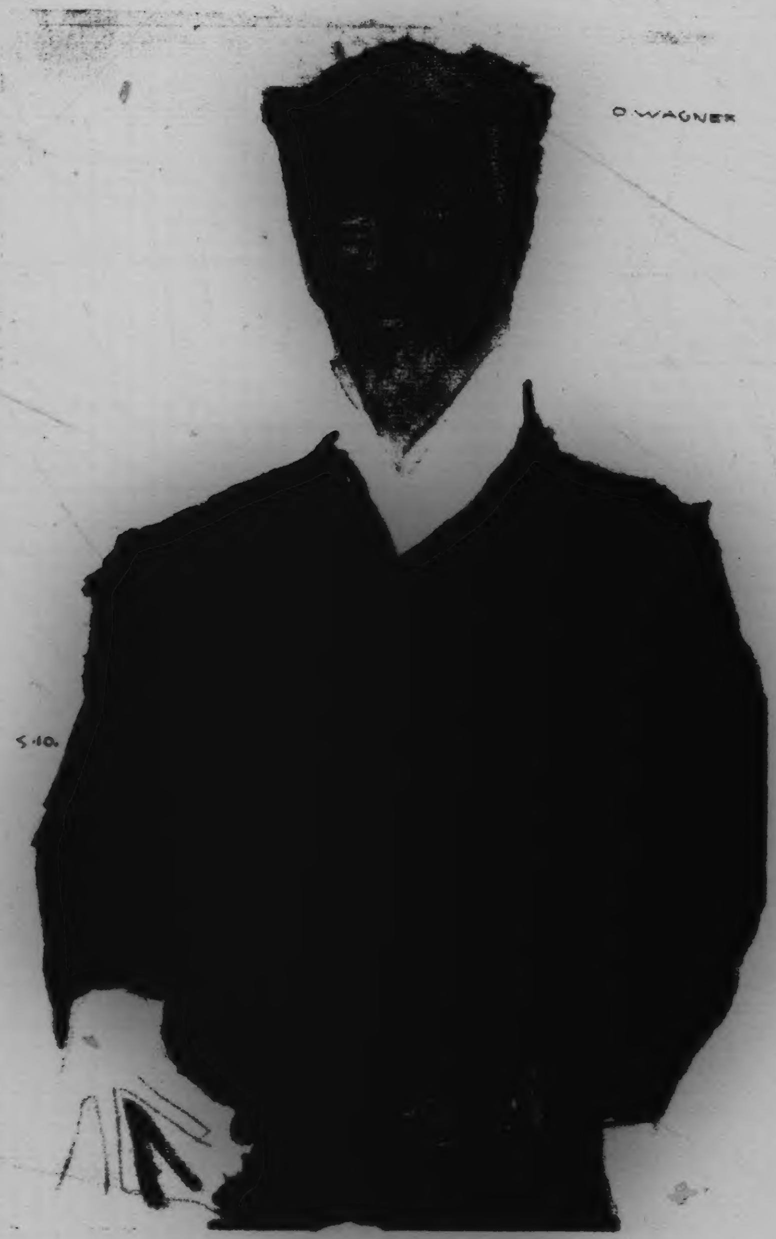
O. WAGNER
S.10.

Figure 16. Egon Schiele, “Otto Wager”, 1910

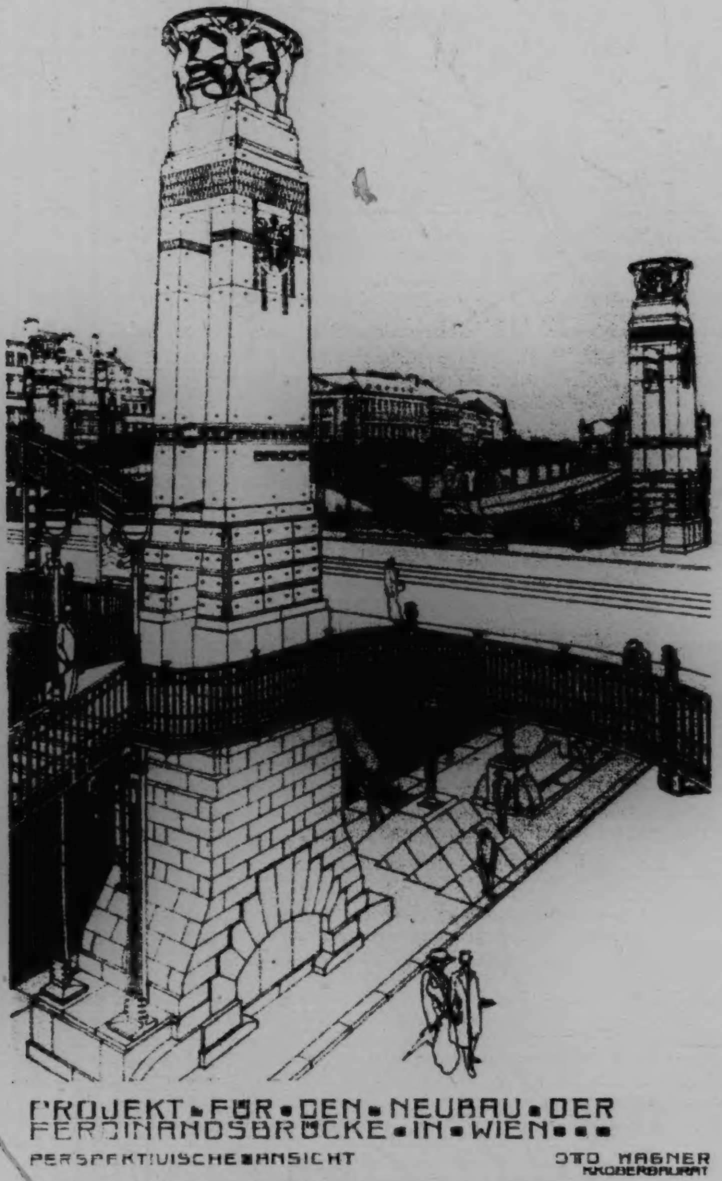
PROJEKT • FÜR • DEN • NEUBAU • DER
FERDINANDSBRÜCKE • IN • WIEN • • •
PERSPEKTIVISCHE • ANSICHT
OTTO WAGNER
K.K.OBERBAURAT

Figure 17. Otto Wagner, Design for the "Ferdinand-bruecke", 1905

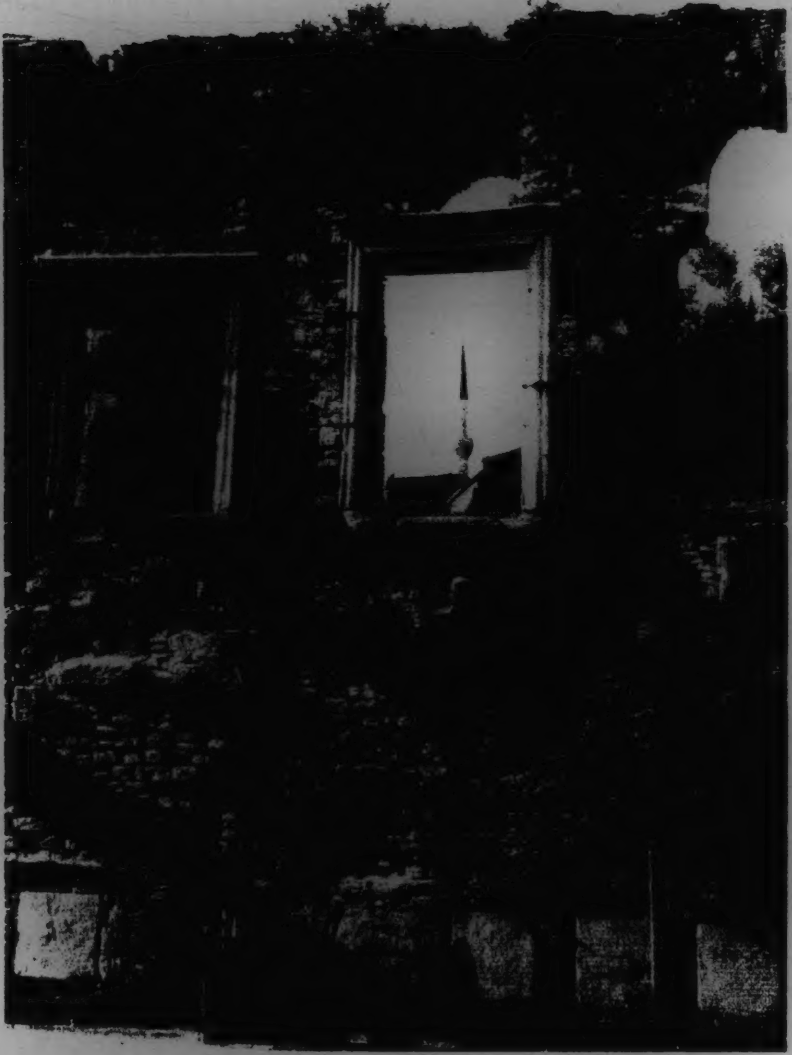

Figure 18. Robert Ginsberg, “City Wall”, Istambul, Turkey, 1965